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Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Reportedly To Postpone Meeting

NC2903082091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0730 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 29 Mar (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR today says that it has been decided to confine the meeting of the Arab League Council, which will be held in Cairo tomorrow, to an opening session, during which the heads of delegations will deliver speeches. The meeting will then be postponed to a date to be established later. The paper notes that the meeting will be postponed because of what the responsible source described as current circumstances.

The source denied that the names of the candidates for the post of the Arab League secretary general will be discussed during the inaugural session. AL-AKHBAR noted that Ambassador Tahir Radwan, head of the Saudi delegation, will leave Cairo for his country to hold consultations with his government on postponing the meeting after the opening session.

Egyptian Representative Comments on Meeting

NC2803164691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1505 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Cairo, 28 Mar (MENA)—Ambassador Mahmud Abu-al-Nasr, Arab Desk chief at the Foreign Ministry and Egypt's permanent representative to the Arab League, has said that the league's ministerial council meeting marks a major step down the road of restoring Arab solidarity and opening a new chapter in intra-Arab relations.

Abu-al-Nasr said in a statement today Egypt welcomes the participation of all the countries in the 95th session of the league's ministerial council, scheduled for Saturday [30 March] in Cairo. This is the league's first meeting since it was relocated to its Cairo headquarters. [passage omitted]

Abu-al-Nasr emphasized that the Arab states could well use some breathing room in order for tempers to calm down. He said the meeting would do well to stay clear of controversial issues in the interest of more effective Arab action in the future. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

Slaying of Dutch Diplomat Blamed on 'Abbas Group

LD2803121391 Hilversum International Service in English 1130 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] A pro-Iraqi terrorist organization, under the leadership of Abu-al-'Abbas [Muhammad 'Abbas], is allegedly responsible for the murder of Dutch diplomat Robert Jan Akkerman. Three men with automatic weapons gunned down Mr. Akkerman in front of his home in Tunis last month. The Palestine Liberation Organization told a Dutch radio reporter about the connection with Abu-al-'Abbas. According to the PLO, the gunmen were planning to kill about 30 dinner guests, many of them diplomats, who were about to arrive at Akkerman's home. The gunmen were apparently surprised by Akkerman, who was waiting at his front gate. The pro-Iraqi gunmen shot Akkerman and fled before they could carry out their attacks on his guests. The terrorists were hoping by the attack to support Saddam Husayn in his war against the allies.

PLO To Attend Cairo Arab League Session

NC2603214791 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Mar 91 pp 14, 18

[By Tawfiq 'Abud]

[Excerpts] Palestinian Ambassador in Amman Al-Tayib 'Abd-al-Rahim has said that a senior delegation will represent the PLO in the Arab League meetings to begin in Cairo next Saturday.

He told AL-DUSTUR that Fatah Central Committee members Mahmud 'Abbas, also known as Abu-Mazin, and Hakam Bal'awi will arrive in Amman on Thursday en route to Cairo. He will represent the PLO in the meetings to be held in light of calls to restore Arab unity, revive joint Arab action, and forego differences following the Gulf crisis.

He said that the Palestinian delegation will present a political working paper to the Arab League Council, stressing that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The working paper also stresses the Palestinian peace initiative and the resolution of previous Arab summits on the Palestine question.

'Abd-al-Rahim added: Palestinian efforts are being made to raise the level of representation at the meetings to the level of foreign ministers, thus changing them from mere administrative meetings to political ones.

He pointed out that Palestinian diplomacy focuses its efforts and contacts on the Arab and international arenas to entrench its representation in the Arab, international, and European institutions in the face of the continuous U.S. attempts to create alternatives to the PLO.

On the context of contacts between Italy and the PLO, the ambassador of the state of Palestine said that an Italian official has met with the Palestinian leadership in Tunisia, shortly before Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti's upcoming visit to the United States. He officially informed the PLO that the Italian Government is committed to holding an international peace conference on the Middle East, to the need to establish an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, and to the PLO's participation in any political process in the region. He expressed readiness to convey any Palestinian ideas to the U.S. Administration.

'Abd-al-Rahim said: Two trends emerged in the Palestinian leadership during its meetings in Tunisia last week. The first trend sees that the United States is sincere in reaching a political settlement in the Middle East to absorb Arab anger, wrath, and disgust over its barbaric aggression on Iraq. The second trend is not optimistic about the U.S. Administration's sincerity in finding a just and comprehensive peace in the region cherished by the peoples in the region. [passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Rahim concluded: The United States' sincerity about establishing just and comprehensive peace in the region can be judged by negotiating with the PLO and taking tangible steps to implement international legitimacy and UN resolutions on the Palestine question, not declaring that no pressure will be exerted on Israel and then providing it with new sources of aid that help it resist international pressures and entrench its occupation of Arab land.

Egypt

Mubarak Interviewed on Gulf Relations

NC2803230391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2050 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 28 Mar (MENA)—In a statement to the Friday edition of the newspaper AL-AHRAM, President Husni Mubarak disclosed hard evidence indicating that Iraqi President Saddam Husayn had absolutely no intention of withdrawing from Kuwait. He was planning to occupy other neighboring countries to establish an Iraqi empire that would threaten Egypt's national security. He said that even when relations between Egypt and Iraq were at their peak within the Gulf Cooperation Council, several Ba'thist cells which Iraqi Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan tried to form in Egypt were apprehended—along with the head of Iraqi Airways—for complicity in plans to strike at the domestic front in Egypt. Moreover, an Iraqi diplomat was expelled at the time for the same reason.

On Egypt's relations with the countries that supported Iraq, President Mubarak stressed that these countries have begun to reconsider their position and revert to moderation. By supporting the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, these countries greatly offended Egypt and the Arab nation. He noted that Yemen mistreated Egyptian workers, including thousands of teachers working there. He said he was compelled to threaten to withdraw all Egyptians after making his decision to withdraw the Egyptian ambassador from Sanaa. Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, however, contacted him, apologized, and expressed the Yemeni people's pride in the historic support Egypt has offered the Yemeni revolution.

President Mubarak expressed his deep regret over Sudan's position, saying that the Sudanese foreign minister has not stopped assailing us in all international conferences, and at his meetings with foreign ambassadors. It seems that the regime in Sudan does not want to establish good relations with Egypt.

Regarding Jordan, President Mubarak said that certain Jordanian forces are still (?plotting) [word indistinct] through contacts with terrorist groups to implement assassinations in Egypt. Mubarak expressed his extreme astonishment at PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's and PLO leaders' insistance on assailing and slandering Egypt. He asked: Has Egypt not borne—and is it not still bearing—enormous burdens for the Palestinian cause, whereas Iraq has never even once shared in even a meager part of this burden? He said: I have many reservations about Yasir 'Arafat, but Egypt will not interfere in the PLO's choice of its leadership, be it 'Arafat or any other.

In his interview, President Husni Mubarak wondered how Egypt can now deal with these regimes, in whom we lost confidence because of their conduct and position. President Mubarak did not, however, rule out the possibility of resuming ties with Iraq and the countries that supported its wrong deed. But he said that it will take time for the deep wound, unprecedented in the history of the Arab nation, to heal; and this can be done by rebuilding confidence through deeds, not words.

With the deepest feelings of bitterness, President Mubarak said he felt so sad when an Egyptian party paper hailed what it called Saddam's victory over the coalition forces at a time when Saddam Husayn was suffering the worst military strike in the history of warfare.

Regarding his view of the situation in the Middle East after the Gulf war, President Mubarak stressed the inevitability of convening the international peace conference as the best means to achieve stability in the region. Mubarak nevertheless warned against convening the conference without making sufficient preparations for it with all the parties concerned.

The president said he recently sent a message on Egypt's view of the peace conference to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir in which he stressed Egypt's principled position on ending the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of the principle of the exchange of land for peace. The president said he believes Israel must first start its dialogue with the Palestinians and the frontline states before demanding dialogue with the other Arabs.

President Mubarak hailed the efficiency and competence of the Egyptian Armed Forces in their mission to liberate Kuwait. He said the plans for the military operations carried out by our Armed Forces were drafted in Egypt by Egyptian commanders. He also said that many countries, including Saudi Arabia, signed contracts with us to purchase our military products which were used in the ground battle, including Egyptian-made rockets used to clear minefields.

The president said: We seek to build a major economic power with the fraternal Arab states, because he who does not have enough food cannot defend himself. The Gulf states have given us major aid, and we are studying many joint ventures with them to achieve further economic cooperation, he added.

In the interview, the president touched on the issue of the Egyptian workers, and the problems being faced by Egyptians in several Arab states as a result of the Gulf crisis. He said the experience of the Egyptian workers abroad in the past five years is being studied now. He also said guidelines must be set to guarantee a job opportunity for the Egyptian worker. There must also be measures to guarantee the Egyptian worker's rights and welfare and preserve his dignity, he added.

Ghali Praises UNSC Statement on Israeli Action

NC2903102391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0922 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 29 Mar (MENA)—Egypt has welcomed the Security Council statement denouncing Israel's decision

to expel four Palestinians from the occupied Arab territories, because this measure contravenes the Fourth Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians under occupation.

In a statement today, Dr. Butrus Ghali, Egyptian minister of state for foreign affairs, repeated that these Israeli measures are an obstacle to peace. He called on Israel to allow the Palestinians to return to their territories.

Papers Comment on Israeli 'Polarization'

NC2403013891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2300 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Mar (MENA)—In tomorrow's issue, the newspaper AL-AHRAM comments on Israel's position on the Middle East peace process. The paper expects a real and wide split in Israeli society within the next few months over the land-for-peace proposal. In an editorial, the paper says that during U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's tour of the region, the Shamir government insisted on the limited plan it proposed in 1988 and refused to give up not only the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but also the Golan Heights.

AL-AHRAM adds: On the other hand, Chief of Staff Dan Shomron openly called for acceptance of the land-for-peace principle.

The paper notes that this split has existed for some time in Israel, but it appears and disappears depending on circumstances. The paper says that in view of the Shamir government's extremism, debate and polarization have again emerged, perhaps more heatedly this time.

In an editorial headlined "The Diplomacy of Wasting Time," the newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH warns against wasting the peace chance as a result of the position taken by the Shamir government.

The paper refers to President Husni Mubarak's statement to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL in which he said he feels that U.S. President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker understand the importance of swift action. Meanwhile, Israel fails to show any sign that it is moving toward a solution and a settlement.

The paper says that while Mubarak's statement was being published, Israel was signalling that it was not moving toward the required and just settlement. On the contrary, it was moving in the opposite direction. The paper refers in this regard to Israeli Housing Minister Sharon, who demands the settlement of Jewish immigrants in the occupied Arab territories to guarantee Israel's security, as he put it.

In its editorial, AL-JUMHURIYAH states that these Israeli policies and actions hurt peace. It says that it is the United States that can have an effect on the matter. As President Mubarak said, the United States should act swiftly to put an end to a strange type of diplomacy which only deserves to be described as the diplomacy of wasting time in view of circumstances that require swift action so that a precious chance to achieve peace will not be wasted.

Destruction of Iraqi Chemical Weapons Opposed

NC2803130391 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Report by Mustafa Bakri in Cairo]

[Text] Our radio has learned from high-level political sources that Egypt has officially informed Washington that it rejects the U.S. condition contained in the draft UN Security Council resolution that Iraq should destroy all its chemical and biological weapons before a final cease-fire can be established in the Gulf.

Egypt has explained that the destruction of these weapons would be a serious precedent at a time when Israel stubbornly refuses to submit its nuclear installations to international inspection. Egypt has stressed that the best way to avert an arms race in the region is to adhere to President Mubarak's initiative calling for the removal of weapons of mass destruction from every state in the region and for the application of this principle to all parties in the Middle East.

Radio Commentary Urges New Iraqi Leadership

NC2403164191 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1240 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Bahiy al-Din Shu'ayb commentary: "There is no Place for Maneuvers and Deception"]

[Excerpts] The UN assistant secretary general has submitted a report to the UN Security Council on his visit to Iraq last week explaining the magnitude of the devastation in Iraq following the second Gulf war. The UN assistant secretary general was accurate and objective in the presentation of what he saw with his own eyes, and about which he said: Seeing things is not like hearing about them, because Iraq has been transformed from a 20th century state into a pre-industrial revolution state and is now like a bedridden man in his death throes. [passage omitted]

When we said that Saddam's flouting of international public opinion was no more than an attempt to commit suicide, we were not saying this to scare him, as he believed, but because we had assessed the situation very accurately in accordance with the political factors at the time. No one can change what has taken place, especially after this tragic adventure cost the Iraqi and Kuwaiti people untold material and human losses. [passage omitted]

If Saddam Husayn now seeks to carry out his maneuvers against the Iraqi people by appointing a new government and a new prime minister and by changing ministerial posts, we would like to say that such maneuvers do not serve the reality of new Iraq. A complete change of

approach and the method with which things are tackled is required. The leadership that planned the adventure of the occupation of Kuwait, defied the entire world, destroyed all bridges with the east, west, north, and south, went into a battle whose results were miscalculated against forces far stronger than it, and exposed the country to devastation and humiliation cannot in any case whatsoever continue to wield power, even if it tries to change ministers or make perfunctory changes in the state's echelons of power.

The difficult economic, political, and security circumstances of the Iraqi people, and the harsh conditions haunting them on the domestic and foreign level are all circumstances that dictate the formation of a national government comprising all sincere and loyal forces, which Saddam has tried throughout his stay in power to stifle, to disperse, and to exclude from political activity. Such a government, made up of nationalist figures will be better able to control the situation and guide the stranded Iraqi ship through the storms. It is more capable psychologically to deal with the wounded people on the domestic level and with the international community on the foreign level and to settle all the crises in the north and the south to end the attempts at fragmentation and internecine fighting and exert all possible efforts to return the country to the threshold of the 21st century.

Writer Criticizes 'Bloody' Kuwaiti Actions

NC1903154091 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 12 Mar 91 pp 1, 3

[Article by Mahfuz al-Ansari: "The Egyptians and Kuwait: Firmness, Violence, Law, and Revenge"]

[Excerpts] I do not want to be hard on the brothers in Kuwait. I hope that I will not be misinterpreted or misunderstood. If my words today are frank and angry I believe they are the same words with which we faced—with anger and violence most of the time—the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait until it was liberated and until Kuwait restored its sovereignty over its land.

Frankly, what I am writing today is not a reproach, but "an account" regarding a group of remarks we have monitored and follow up sadly. We also hope that a quick review will straighten out matters before they become uncontrollable.

The first remark:
Reports say that a bloody pursuit is taking place against the Egyptians in Kuwait—the capital, the cities, and liberated areas—and in Iraq—cities and villages—and on the long and difficult return road from Kuwait in the south toward al-Basrah and the rest of northern Iraq.

Both form and content of the reports, whether correct or exaggerated, that the Iraqi Republican Guard Forces and Army are killing Egyptians in revenge for Egypt's principled position in support of Kuwait and for the participation of its military forces in the liberation operation are rejected. Such an aggression by any Iraqi against defenseless and peaceful people who played a constructive part in Iraqi society and who agreed to live there during good and bad days, in peace and war, is a crime and a sin that we reject. If these acts by the Iraqis are rejected, such practices against Egyptians by "the returning authority to Kuwait" or its agents who arrived there first are also consistently rejected. [passage omitted]

The second remark:

It is difficult for the simple Egyptian citizen, who can receive information easily, to accept the decisive final decisions that American, British, and French companies as well as Western companies in general have a monopoly on all reconstruction contracts. These contracts were not special contracts between the private sector in Kuwait and their counterparts in the West. They are 100 percent official political contracts even if private sector companies will carry out reconstruction work.

This is the crux of the problem. When such sizable contracts are involved, the issue is the homeland, so that there is no difference between what is public and what is private. The government and the people then become one, and the central objective is that the state will finally obtain the contracts it needs.

It is very difficult to accept that the Kuwaitis and the Egyptians get the crumbs and the menial work only, whether in skilled or unskilled labor, or some subcontracts in those operations in which gentlemen refuse to tarnish their hands.

On this point, we will hear thousands of excuses.

I would like to testify here that my friend 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Kandari, Kuwait's ambassador in Cairo, has complained about the Egyptian departments and offices' procrastination and said that he has mentioned this to everyone he meets. However, they wasted time and were not ready. They waited while others acted immediately, conducted studies, and made offers. They will say that the U.S. and European gentlemen's operations, whose offers won, require advanced technology, something they have and we do not.

They will say this and many other things which it would be better not to discuss now. We will probably tackle them later.

It is also true, however, that when state contracts are involved, the state seeking these contracts can do much. It can impose the parties it wants as basic partners in these contracts. It can directly impose this or that tender on a brother. This is not sensitive about which one should not talk. It is an essential matter requiring frankness. British Prime Minister John Major visited the

region accompanied by a British delegation of businessmen. In the same way that he discussed war and liberation and related affairs, he also discussed issues of reconstruction and the contracts that should be alloted to his country.

What we are talking about is not part of the process of donations or grants among brothers. It is one of the requisites of security within its comprehensive concept. It is a requisite of progress in a nation that upholds the banner of one people and one homeland. It is one of the requisites of solidarity that needs practical examples to substantiate it so that people will be encouraged to act during crises.

We have seen how people act in major crises like the invasion of Kuwait and the expulsion of its people, especially when they have common interests, and how people are encouraged to offer sacrifices and make efforts. Anything else is dangerous, and the people's memory is always alert and they never forget.

The challenge that our nation, countries, and people face does not end with the crisis of the liberation of Kuwait. It is a protracted, continuous, and multifaceted challenge that needs loyalty, not slyness. [passage omitted]

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Destroys Egyptian Border Checkpoint

LD2803184291 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 1715 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpts] At a historic national celebration, in a huge mass feast and in a splendid historic moment, on the occasion of the 21st anniversary of the evacuation of the British bases and forces, the unionist revolutionary, the trustee of pan-Arabism, Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi destroyed with a bulldozer the symbolic gate built by colonialism between the sons of the one Arab people in Egypt and Libya and trampled with his feet on the gate which was a symbol of separation.

[Begin al-Qadhdhafi recording] This land was occupied by the enemy (?British) forces [word indistinct] on Tobruk and its soil. The English base of Adem was in this place, from which British aircraft took off in order to attack 'Abd-al-Nasir's Egypt in 1956 because he nationalized the Suez Canal and returned it from the British colonialist grip to the Egyptian people.

The Suez Canal plays an important role in the economy of the Egyptian people and in the income of fraternal Egypt. This huge income, from the duties of the Suez Canal, which belongs to the Egyptian people, used to go to the British treasury; thus 'Abd-al-Nasir nationalized the Suez Canal Company and made the Suez Canal an Egyptian canal. The tripartite aggression against 'Abd-al-Nasir took place in 1956 because he returned the canal to Egypt; the British aircraft took off from this place, Adem base, which is now Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir base, and attacked Egypt, which was under colonial control; and the Libyan people had no power, (?did not) know and had no control over their land when the aircraft took off to attack Egypt. [passage omitted]

Today, brothers, we mark the 21st anniversary of the expulsion of the British forces which used to occupy this place. Today, as we are celebrating this anniversary, we want to tell ourselves about the meaning of evacuation—evacuation of the foreigner and the end of the foreigner's control, so that we can enjoy free will. Now that our land is free, and our will is free and the decision lies in our hands, why should we be incapable of removing the border which was created by the British and the Italians to separate the one people and the one land—Egypt and Libya. [cheers] In order that evacuation may have a real meaning and in order that we may feel freedom and that our will is independent, we declare today the removal of the artificial border between Egypt and Libya—between the one people and the one land; no border after today between Egypt and Libya; no customs, no duties, and no permission from anyone; when you leave Mersa Matruh for Tubruq, it is like moving from Darna to Tubruq [cheers]. When you leave Cairo for al-Kufrah, it is like moving from Tripoli to al-Kufrah. Does anyone ask you anything when you move from Cairo to Alexandria? Are there customs between Cairo and Alexandria? No customs between Cairo and Tripoli and Alexandria and Benghazi [cheers], and between Mersa Matruh and Tubruq, and between [words indistinct]. This is your land and you are free over this land. So move on this land freely and defend it until death [cheers]. [end recording]

Bahrain

General Schwarzkopf Departs Manama 28 Mar

NC2803171191 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1320 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Manama, 28 Mar (WAKH)—General Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the U.S forces in the Gulf, and his delegation left Manama after noon today after a two-day visit to Bahrain. [passage omitted]

Iranian Ship Arrives, Inaugurates Shipping Line

NC2803121091 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1044 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Manama, 28 Mar (WAKH)—The Iranian Ship "Hormuz" arrived in Bahrain this morning, inaugurating officially the navigation line between Bahrain and Iran, which will link the Port of Manama in Bahrain and the Iranian Port of Bushehr. The director of the Supply and Price Control Department, Muhammad Baqir al-Tajir, Iranian Ambassador to Bahrain Javad Torkabadi, and other officials met the ship.

The director of the Supply and Price Control Department said the inauguration of this line will promote trade between the two countries, and that the opportunity now exists for the private sector in the two countries to use this line for benefit of mutual trade. [passage omitted]

The Iranian ambassador also spoke, noting the importance of opening this line to enhance relations. He said Iran wants to promote economic cooperation with the region's countries and that there will be more of this cooperation in the future.

Kuwait

Indian Embassy Reopens 28 Mar

BK2803081291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] The Indian Embassy in Kuwait is reopening today after seven months. An Indian diplomat Mr. M.K. Bhadra Kumar has already reached Kuwait city by road from the Saudi border post of al-Khafji to reopen the embassy which was closed down in the wake of the Gulf crisis. Some other diplomats and embassy staff have also reached there.

Reports from Kuwait say that before the Indian staff are allowed entry to the embassy building, American and French military authorities will check the premises for any mines and explosives. All the diplomatic missions reopening in Kuwait have adopted this procedure.

Editor Criticizes Iraq's Arab Backers

LD2803143191 London KUNA in Arabic 0949 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Commentary by KUNA chief editor—formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Excerpt] London, 28 Mar (KUNA)—The current tours and the calls for filling the gaps by a number of Arab officials and leaders, and the calls some days ago for a session of the Arab League in Cairo, are the first of their kind since the end of the war to liberate Kuwait of Iraqi occupation. There would have been many positive results from these calls, if they had come from other officials, and from others who have not been involved right up to their ears in splitting and dividing the Arabs during all those seven months. [passage omitted]

When the nightmare of the Iraqi occupation fell on Kuwait and the occupiers began the destruction, plundering, and dismantling of Kuwait trampling on its people's dignity, violating the honor of Kuwaiti women, and terrifying the children of Kuwait, the Kuwaitis hoped there would be a unified Arab stand rejecting and condemning occupation, striving toward exposing and isolating the aggressor so that this aggressor would discover the deadly and devastating mistake he had made, affecting the entire Arab nation. [passage omitted]

What cut so deep into the hearts of Kuwaitis were the stands supporting the occupation—stands which came from states that Kuwait had always supported and was among the first to aid whenever they were in need of help. [passage omitted]

What confounded the Kuwaitis and bled their hearts was the support for the Iraqi attitude from the leadership of the PLO, which Kuwait had always placed inside its heart. In fact Kuwait was its birthplace and the artery which supplied it with the means of life until it grew up and its backbone hardened and received wide international recognition. Kuwait had a big role in achieving it.

These states and sides shut their eyes and plugged their ears so as not to hear about the atrocities of the occupiers against the Kuwaiti people and the cries of pain and suffering of Kuwaitis under the bayonets of war. They came forth with stands that bore no relationship to principles, Arab or Islamic traditions—stands that played an effective part in misleading their peoples and diverted their feelings toward serving objectives and aims which the coming days will reveal and prove to be dishonest and untruthful.

We do not believe that Arab people given the freedom to formulate their own convictions would support the occupation of an Arab land and the slaying of its people under the slogan—even if it was the resounding Arab unity slogan which is sung by all the Arabs and which was stabbed so deeply by the folly of the Iraqi president in occupying Kuwait. One quick glance at the Arab homeland is sufficient to convince those who are not

convinced of the tragedy with which the Iraqi president has sunk the entire nation. Let us find out:

1. Two Arab nations—Kuwait and Iraq—completely destroyed. The blood of their two peoples was spilled profusely. Their resources and potentials were burned down. Now they have to restart from point zero to reconstruct and rebuild. If the [material] reconstruction is going to take time to accomplish the human destruction will take so many generations to restore.
2. A civil war in Iraq which only God knows how it will end and what its consequences will be.
3. A deep split in Arab ranks—one cannot imagine how it would be filled as long as the leaderships and commands which caused it remain in power.
4. A devastation and great setback to the Palestinian issue at international level now that the PLO leadership has lost its credibility as a result of supporting the occupation.

This is what the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait has resulted in for Kuwait and for those who supported the occupation and who today have come up with calls to repair the rift and return to Arab solidarity so as to stand up to the challenges.

We wish to ask Jordan's King Husayn and the responsible officials of his government, who took the initiative in making these calls, where they were during all the long months since August? They did not utter one single appeal to their ally in Baghdad to stop killing and slaughtering the innocent Kuwaitis.

We also ask where they were and where was PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat as they witnessed the occupation forces commit acts of destruction and murder and destroy the future of hundreds of thousands of Kuwaitis, not only of the Kuwaitis but also of their brother Palestinians whom Kuwait had embraced for scores of years?

Where were Husayn, 'Arafat, [Sudanese Prime Minister] al-Bashir, and [Yemeni President] 'Abdallah Salih? Did they not all hear of the sufferings of the Kuwaitis and their agonies and pain? Was this not Arab blood whose shedding is prohibited? Were not these Arab lives that were slaughtered with an Arab knife? Was not Kuwait an Arab land that was violated, pillaged, scorched, and destroyed for no reason other than greed and avarice?

Does Husayn not see his citizens who were made destitute by the occupation and who are now unable to find the means of subsistence for themselves in his Kingdom after they have lost all the hard-earned fruits of their toil over the years as a result of the occupation?

We in Kuwait have always supported the healing of rifts and the resolution of differences. This time, however, we will not abandon our memories. For we are still bleeding, our body is still suffering from the wounds, and our heart has been bloodied by the Iraqi stab. We will not accept the principle of "May God forgive the past deeds and let us bury the past and start again." This is because the past seven months have taught us many lessons.

We say to the quartet which allied with Saddam and enabled him to continue with his error and repression that the hour of reckoning has come and that there is no longer any room for them in the heart and conscience of Kuwait. This is not a threat but what is dictated to us by the pains, wounds, and suffering of our people because of the occupation and its horrors.

The healing of rifts, the resolving of differences, and Arab solidarity are all our ambitions and highest hopes. But we believe that our people will not forgive us if we go back to extending our hand to those who sharpened the knives of Saddam and helped him to place the necks of all of us on the slaughter table.

We believe that this is not the attitude of the Kuwaiti people alone but that of the Arab people throughout the Arab homeland who have begun to wake up now to the devastating horrific facts of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. We are convinced that the Arab people will bring their leaderships to account for their stands and will punish them for what they have done to their brothers the Kuwaiti people, and that they will not accept after this bitter experience any further trading and outbidding with the Arab people's souls, blood, aspirations, and hopes.

[Syrian] President Hafiz al-Asad was right when he said to the king of Jordan, when he visited Damascus two days ago to mediate, that Saddam is embarking on a new act of deception to win the support of the Arab rulers against the Iraqi opposition and the uprising now ablaze in Iraq.

State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Visits PRC

HK2603124791

For PRC reportage on the visit by Kuwaiti Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Dr. 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Awadi to China, including reports on his talks with President Yang Shangkun and other leaders, please see the Near East & South Asia section of the 21 March China DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Saudi Arabia

General Sultan Discusses Iraq, POW Situations

LD2603195791 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Excerpts] His Royal Highness Lieutenant General Khalid Bin-Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, commander of the joint forces, has said that this visit to the wounded in the Desert Storm operation at Riyadh military hospital last night was at the direction of the King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Su'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques and supreme commander of the Armed Forces,

his loyal crown prince, and his highness the second deputy prime minister. [passage omitted]

Answering a question, his highness the commander of the joint forces said: What is happening at present in Iraq is sad. There is great destruction in Iraqi cities at the hands of the forces of Saddam Husayn, against innocent people.

His highness denied that there is any intention on the part of the joint forces to intervene in Iraq. He confirmed that the joint forces plan was committed from the start to non-interference in Iraqi cities or villages, and said: Our main objective was the liberation of Kuwait, in line with UN resolutions. What happens in Iraq is up to the Iraqis themselves.

His highness described relations with the United States as strong since the era of the founder of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, His Majesty the late King 'Abd-al-'Aziz, and U.S. President Roosevelt. His highness said: We welcome our friends and do our best in treating them, and they will return to their homelands in accordance with the plans.

He explained that about 160,000 soldiers of the friendly and sister forces which took part in the liberation of Kuwait operation have left. He said agreement has been reached on sending home 5,000 Iraqi prisoners a day during the next few days, instead of 500. He added: We are eager to send the prisoners we have to their families, especially in the blessed month of Ramadan.

Fifth Group of Kuwaiti POW's Arrive in 'Ar'ar

LD2803201891 Riyadh SPA in English 1928 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] 'Ar'ar, Northern Saudi Arabia, March 28, SPA—The fifth batch of Kuwaiti prisoners of war, detained by the Iraqi forces while retreating from Kuwait, arrived in 'Ar'ar last night. The group, consisting of 679 persons, was received by Shaykh Ahmad al-Hamud al-Sabah, chairman of the POWs reception committee and a number of Red Cross and Kuwaiti officials.

Shaykh Ahmad expressed his pleasure over the reception of Kuwaiti prisoners. Shaykh Ahmad hoped that more prisoners will be released by the Iraqi regime next week. Concerning the POWs, Shaykh Ahmad [said] they were exhausted but in high spirit.

Editorials View Arab League, 'Uprising' in Iraq

LD2803133591 Riyadh SPA in English 1229 GMT 28 Mar 91

[From the Press review]

[Text] Riyadh, March 28, SPA—Saudi papers today devoted their editorials to comment on a number of Arab and international events with concentration on reports about the popular uprising in Iraq against the regime of Saddam Husayn. The papers also welcomed the upcoming meeting of the Arab League to be held Cairo on Saturday [30 March]. The Jeddah based, AL-BILAD, cited the great importance attached on the meeting of the League's council amid the uneasy circumstances created by the Iraqi vicious aggression on Kuwait. The paper expressed hope that the meeting would come out with positive results that might retain the credibility of the League which was remarkably shaken by the Arab Gulf crisis because of the conflicting positions that would never serve the best interests of the Arab nation.

'UKAZ of Jeddah highlighted the Iraqi popular uprising against the dictator Saddam Husayn and his corrupted junta following the defeat of the Iraqi Armed Forces. Events of this month uncovered to what extent the Iraqi people is eager to revolt against oppression and atrocities of Baghdad's regime and despite the information blackout over what is going on over there, all signs indicate that the Iraqi people has become increasingly impatient and determined to topple the tyrant and his supporters, 'UKAZ said. AL-MADINAH, also published in Jeddah, cited the great damage done to the Arab relations because of the selfish desires of the Iraqi ruler Saddam Husayn. The paper expressed hope that the Arab countries have gotten the lesson and could open a new page in relations that might realise the best interests and aspirations of the Arab nation.

AL-YAWM, published in al-Dammam also devoted its editorial to shed light on the popular uprising of the Iraqi people against the regime of Saddan Husayn and said the return of the Kurdish leader, Jalal Al-Talabani would have a great significant on the process of the revolution against the Iraqi tyrant over there. AL-JAZIRAH, published in Riyadh, expressed surprise that a leader like Saddam Husayn, who led his country and armed forces to devastation and misery, is still willing to rule whatever the price might be. The daily expressed confidence that the Iraqi people would eventually come out victorious and overthrow the tyrant.

Vice President Ramadan Visits Al-Najaf, Babil

NC2803215591 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council [RCC] member and vice president, visited al-Najaf Governorate today. Ramadan held a meeting there attended by al-Najaf Governor 'Abd-al-Rahim al-Duri, a number of comrade members of the command of the al-Najaf [Ba'th] Party branch, and heads of departments in the governorate.

The vice president made a comprehensive tour of al-Najaf Governorate, accompanied by the governor and a number of [word indistinct]. He was briefed on the progress of work on current projects in the governorate for offering the best services to citizens.

Taha Yasin Ramadan said: The heroic stands taken by the wise sons of al-Najaf who confronted the mobs and agents have confirmed the adherence of the al-Najaf sons to their Arabism and their genuine affiliation to their great Iraq and loyalty to leader President Saddam Husayn.

Taha Yasin Ramadan heard a detailed report from the governor on the normal, tranquil, and secure life in the governorate. He was also briefed on the nature of work in the state departments and schools in the governorate and its districts and subdistricts. [words indistinct] the sons of the governorate to provide security and cleanliness in that holy city, where the mobs went on a rampage.

Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan visited [name indistinct] district and held an expanded meeting with its officials and the comrade members of the command of the party branch in [name indistinct].

Taha Yasin Ramadan, RCC member and vice president, was briefed on the urgent services that have been provided during that period to the citizens in the district. He was also briefed on the measures taken to restore the tranquil and secure life, which the agents and traitors have tried to undermine and destroy. The vice president stressed the need for constant coordination between the party organizations and the state departments with the aim of providing all services to the sons of our great people.

Taha Yasin Ramadan, RCC member and vice president, also visited Babil Governorate. He held a meeting there attended by Salih Khalil (?al-Khayyim), governor of the second governorate, Babil; the comrade secretary of the command of Babil Party branch; a number of comrade members of the branch command; and officials in the governorate.

Taha Yasin Ramadan hailed the high spirit of cooperation among the officials in the administrative organs, the comrades in the party organizations, and Babil citizens. He noted the achievements the governorate and its sincere citizens have made.

Further on Ibrahim's Tour of Karkuk

NC2803203791 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] At 1200 on Thursday, 28 March, 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces, toured the streets and alleys of Karkuk after the agents who are traitors to their homeland and members of the saboteur and plundering cliques were miserably defeated.

The dear city has been completely and totally purged of all the elements of agentry and vileness.

'Izzat Ibrahim met with Karkuk citizens, who received the procession of right and virtue with chants, ululations, and cheers for the victorious leader Saddam Husayn.

RCC Vice Chairman 'Izzat Ibrahim said: We will implore God to grant us assistance and support and we shall triumph over all the elements of delusion, oppression, and those who spread falsehoods. We shall defeat them forever and they will be hoisted with their own petard.

The RCC vice chairman added that the vile lackeys of the foreigners cannot harm the homeland's dignity and pride that has been realized by leader President Saddam Husayn. Nor can they damage the homeland's image. In the name of the Almighty God and in the name of the great leader, every agent pocket has been and will be smashed.

Ibrahim added that leader Saddam Husayn shall remain the crown on our head and our high banner, waving over the hills of good and glory. The land of the bountiful homeland will remain protected by him and be grateful for his favor. Baghdad shall remain the banner of history, the gem of the Arabs, the flower of their culture, and the cradle of the human principles and values.

Ba'th Party Official Salih Visits Saddam City

NC2803183391 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1530 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Comrade Sa'di Mahdi Salih, member of the Ba'th Party Regional Command and secretary of the Ba'th Party's Baghdad branch, has conveyed President leader Saddam Husayn's greetings to the people of Saddam City.

During his meeting with the chairman of the Baghdad People's Central Council and the chairmen of the Ba'th Party's Saddam branch People's Councils today, Comrade Sa'di Mahdi Salih said that the honorable Iraqis, builders of the human civilization dating back 6,000 years, are now capable of rebuilding the great Iraq that has been targeted by the United States and its renegade collaborators. He added that the winds of the subversive conspiracy within the series of plots against Iraq will blow away just as other winds had blown away as a result

of the steadfastness of the good sons of Iraq and their historical leadership that triggered the glorious 17-30 July revolution under the command of struggler President Saddam Husayn.

Comrade Sa'di Mahdi Salih emphasized that the revolution's real strength is the Iraqi people, who remain steadfast and above against the most ferocious link in the chain of conspiracies of the agents and hirelings who tried to foment sedition and sow sectarianism among them. He indicated that the sons of the struggling city of Saddam have been a model by not responding to the delusive slogans raised by the malevolent mobs. The sons of this city have expressed their absolute true loyalty to the principles of the great July revolution under the leadership of struggler President Saddam Husayn, who has given this city extraordinary attention, just as he has given attention and care to other Iraqi cities.

Cheering and chanting, the sons of Saddam City renewed their allegiance to struggler President Saddam Husayn.

Party Official Continues Inspection of Al-Basrah

NC2803150391 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Comrade 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur, member of the Ba'th Party regional command and secretary of the party's branch in the south, has continued his inspection tour of the al-Basrah Governorate. He conveyed to its sons the greetings of President leader Saddam Husayn.

During his tour, he inspected the popular action campaigns in the governorate to repair the destruction caused by the agent saboteurs. Citizens, party members, official departments personnel, and mass organizations in the al-Basrah Governorate are taking part in these campaigns.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur also met a number of citizen shopkeepers and asked them about their affairs. He then visited a number of service sectors and stressed the need to speed up the provision of services for the citizens.

He was accompanied on his tour by al-Basrah Governor 'Abdallah Talab 'Azzam.

Culture Minister Receives PLO's Hurani 28 Mar

NC2803135691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1300 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Mar (INA)—Culture and Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi received PLO Executive Committee Member 'Abdallah Hurani today. They reviewed relations between Iraq and the PLO and new developments in the region.

PFLP Expresses Support for Saddam

NC2803133991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1000 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Tunis, 28 Mar (INA)—The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] has voiced its absolute solidarity with the Iraqi people under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn (?the symbol) of Arab resolve and defiance.

In a statement to the INA correspondent in Tunis, the PFLP official spokesman said that the Palestinian people have expressed their complete willingness to share in the reconstruction of what was destroyed by the aggression.

The spokesman said that the "mother of battles" is still and will always remain a shining page of glory in the history of Iraq, its Army, and its people, as well as in the history of the Arab nation.

The spokesman said that the current conflict between Arab righteousness and imperialist-Zionist falsehood had been going on since the turn of the century and is still going on, adding that the various battles fought by the Arabs were landmarks of glory and dignity.

The spokesman said that the conflict with the imperialist, Zionist, and reactionary forces will continue until falsehood is defeated and Arab righteousness emerges as the uncontested winner.

The PFLP spokesman called on the masses of the Arab people and all the forces of liberation in the world to work toward breaking the unjust and unjustified economic embargo imposed on the Iraqi people.

Tehran Radio Reports Continuing Clashes in Baghdad

LD2803171791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpt] According to a Central News Unit report citing an Iraqi opposition spokesperson in Damascus, the Baghdad al-Jadid District is still the scene of demonstrations and extensive clashes between the people and government forces. The spokesperson added: In order to suppress the popular uprising, especially in Baghdad, the Iraqi regime has issued orders giving complete freedom to its forces to shoot and kill. According to the source, popular forces have inflicted severe blows on Saddam's defeated army fleeing southern Iraq toward Baghdad. For example, a column of tanks belonging to Ba'thist forces was set on fire on the al-'Amarah-al-Kut highway and many of the arms and equipment of these forces were captured by the militant muslims. [passage omitted]

Kurdish Leader Mustafa Reportedly Killed

TA2703191591 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 27 Mar 91

[Text] A spokesman for one of the insurgent Kurdish groups fighting Saddam Husayn claims that the Iraqi Army has advanced 11 Scud missile launchers into northern Iraq and formed 16 divisions in an attempt to retrieve Karkuk from the rebels. According to him, the Kurds responded by deploying artillery and armor batteries that they had seized from the Iraqi Army.

Our monitor Mikha'el Gurdus reports that the Kurdish underground radio has announced that the rebel forces' deputy commander, Muhammad Ibrahim Mustafa, was killed today in battle against the Iraqi Army.

Kurdish Leader on U.S. 'Green Light' to Saddam

NC2803171391 Paris AFP in English 1645 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Nicosia, March 28 (AFP)—A Kurdish rebel chief said Thursday that Iraqi warplanes opened an attack on the rebel-held oil city of Karkuk overnight in what was being seen as a key battle.

Soviet-made Sukhoi bombers and heavy artillery were used Wednesday night [27 March] to attack the city, the leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (DPK), Mas'ud Barzani, told AFP in Tehran.

Use by Iraq of fixed-wing aircraft would be a violation of the ceasefire agreement with the U.S.-led alliance, which drove Baghdad's forces from Kuwait. [passage omitted]

On Thursday, helicopters raided the town of Qirahinjeer, near Karkuk, the DPK leader said in a statement issued at his headquarters near Irbil.

Six civilians were killed and 63 wounded in similar attacks on the town of Berarash, he said. Iraqi forces Thursday kept up a barrage of artillery fire from Mosul, 40 kilometres (25 miles) away.

By not grounding Iraqi helicopters, Mr. Barzani charged, the United States and its allies had given the "green light" for President Husayn "to continue massacring Iraqi civilians." [passage omitted]

The party had said Wednesday that "the popular forces were able to retake control of several parts of Karbala', where 300 soldiers have joined the uprising."

The Iraqi News Agency said Iraq's new vice president, Taha Yasin Ramadan, visited the holy city on Monday and met with local officials of Iraq's ruling Ba'th Party.

The Iraqi opposition's Joint Action Committee on Thursday urged Arab foreign ministers, due to meet Saturday in Cairo, to intervene immediately to "end the massacre of the Iraqi people" by government forces.

The committee in a message also asked for "emergency material and food aid as well as medicine which will have to be brought directly to rebels in regions not controlled by the regime of Saddam Husayn."

The action committee groups five Kurdish parties, six Islamic groups, socialists, communists and nationalist movements. [passage omitted]

Kurds Appeal for Help; Face Saddam Counterattack

AU2803161691 Paris AFP in English 1545 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Paris, March 28 (AFP) — Iraqi Kurds on Thursday appealed to the international community not to leave them to stand alone against the forces of Saddam Husayn.

They called for pressure to be put on the Iraqi leader to stop what they described as civilian massacres and urged the delivery of relief aid to the north of the country.

A leading Kurdish figure Mahmoud Osman said: "They are bombing us, and using napalm, and civilian casualties are heavy."

Aircraft, particularly Soviet-made Sukhoi aircraft, had bombed Kurdish regions twice, and there had been "many helicopter attacks".

The leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, Mas'ud Barzani, said in Tehran that Iraqi warplanes had mounted their first night raid on the rebel-held oil city of Karkuk late Wednesday.

Use by Iraq of aircraft would be a breach of the cease-fire agreement with the U.S.-led alliance which drove Baghdad's forces from Kuwait.

Iraqi Government forces had earlier been reported massing for a counter-attack to recapture key points over-run by Kurdish-led resistance.

The Front for Iraqi Kurdistan, at a press conference here, appealed to the international community and European countries, to stop massacres of Kurdish and Iraqi civilian populations by government forces, and to provide humanitarian aid to the north of the country.

"The house is burning, we need firemen," Mr. Osman, the leader of the Kurdistan Socialist Party said at the Kurdish Institute here.

"We claim recognition of the rights of Kurds and ask the international community not to leave us to stand alone as happened during chemical attacks (in 1988)," he said.

Kurdish fighters were restricting their campaign to Kurdish areas so as not to attack Arabian regions, he said. "We hope that there will be an uprising in Baghdad as soon as possible."

Kurdish fighters were equipped with "many light weapons taken from the enemy", but did not have sophisticated weapons such as anti-aircraft and anti-helicopter missiles.

Mr. Osman, a member of the front's political leadership, said he was trying to organize a flow of European aid to Iraqi Kurdistan. Iraqi Kurds had been in contact with neighbouring countries, and particularly with Turkey, to permit the movement of humanitarian aid and of journalists who were invited as witnesses.

"We already have the agreement of Sweden and we are trying to clarify the situation with France and Britain," he said.

The humanitarian organization Medecins du Monde (Doctors of the World) is to send an aircraft loaded with medical supplies, which should arrive in Iraqi Kurdistan on April 3, the president of the organisation Jacques Lebas said.

Mr. Osman said that he had met the French Secretary of State for Humanitarian Actions Bernard Kouchner, representatives of non-governmental organisations, and the French president's diplomatic adviser Pierre Morel at the Elysee palace.

He had also met the wife of President Francois Mitterrand, Danielle Mitterrand, who is president of the France-Libertes foundation and who, he said, has shown interest in the Kurdish cause.

'Infiltrators' Fleeing From Army in North

NC2903093391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0830 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 29 Mar (INA)—Iraqi media have shown great interest in purging areas in northern and southern Iraq and the return of normal life to them.

Today's newspapers carry the news of the liberation of these areas on their front pages. They also publish pictures from the liberated areas and statements by administrative officials on plans to reconstruct what was destroyed and sabotaged.

AL-QADISIYAH, the organ of the Defense Ministry, citing its own information, says that the situation in northern Iraq is proceeding well and according to plan and that the remnants of the agents, infiltrators, and hooligans are fleeing en masse before the purging operations being carried by the Armed Forces in the region. These operations will achieve their desired results, as in central and southern Iraq. [passage omitted]

MiG-23 Raids Over Karbala' Produce Casualties

NC2803053091 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpt] The city of Karbala' has been the target of the Iraqi regime's air attacks. Iraqi rebels have stated that during this attack, in which MiG-23's were used against the positions of popular forces, a large number of people were martyred and wounded.

Iraqi military aircraft yesterday dropped pamphlets over Karbala' warning residents against creating unrest and threatening the use of more chemical gases.

Clashes between the people and Ba'thist forces continue in other cities in southern Iraq and especially in cities around the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. [passage omitted]

Al-Da'wah Party Spokesman Reports Rebel Successes

NC2803162191 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] The activities of the sweeping popular uprising continue in a large number of Iraqi cities and areas while the Iraqi regime's troops are using the most lethal weapons to suppress it. Meanwhile, all of Iraq is suffering from starvation.

In his presentation of the ongoing events in Iraq, a spokesman for the Information Bureau of the Iraqi Islamic al-Da'wah Party said that the holy city of Karbala' has been recaptured and that it and its environs are now under the popular forces' full control. In the meantime, the Iraqi regime continues to drop leaflets asking the residents to evacuate the city. They are also continuing to use the most lethal weapons, including chemical weapons, on the fighters.

The spokesman added that the al-Samawah area remained controlled by the popular forces. He went on to say that part of al-Nasiriyah remained under government control. In Baghdad, the walls were painted with slogans condemning the authorities and demanding the downfall of Saddam Husayn, the head of the regime. In the cities located in central Iraq, the bodies of men, women, and children are scattered due to the savage shelling by the regime's troops.

In the al-Basrah area, the popular forces captured the commander of the 5th Division, who holds the rank of brigadier general, along with a large number of the division's senior officers. In addition, the popular forces deployed in the al-'Amarah area captured the al-Kahla' subdistrict officer, along with 40 of the regime's governorate officials.

The spokesman went on to say that the regime's forces are now in a state of collapse and that their morale is deteriorating. He said that many of these troops are waiting to join the popular forces or to simply drop their weapons and stop fighting. Iraqi officers who joined the popular forces in the al-'Amarah area have said that the regime sent helicopters loaded with chemical weapons to attack southern cities, particularly al-'Amarah and al-Basrah.

The correspondent for the British newspaper THE GUARDIAN affirmed today that the Iraqi regime's troops are bombing civilian residents in the northern city of Karkuk. The correspondent added that the regime's helicopters are dropping bombs, specifically napalm

bombs, on civilians indiscriminately in a bid to retake the city which has fallen into the hands of the Iraqi popular forces.

Deserting Iraqi soldiers affirmed yesterday that the Iraqi regime's troops mounted missile launchers near the al-Basrah port in southern Iraq. Soldiers who left al-Basrah yesterday morning said that the missiles were moved there in the wake of recent developments and in light of the escalation of the popular uprising forces.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi regime admitted that one helicopter, along with its crewmen, defected to Iran two days ago. Baghdad radio said that the Iraqi foreign minister asked the Iranian charge d'affaires in Baghdad to return the helicopter and its crewmen.

In a related development, hundreds of Iraqi opposition refugees demonstrated in front of the office of the UN Higher Commission for Refugees in Pakistan yesterday, expressing their hostility toward the head of the Iraqi regime. AFP said that the demonstrators shouted slogans, expressed support for the Iraqi uprising, and submitted a statement to the commission.

Rebel Forces in South Seize MiG, Sukhoi Bombers

NC2803182791 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Regarding internal developments in Iraq, the opposition forces in southern Iraq seized the headquarters of the 8th Infantry Brigade of the Iraqi regime's troops in the city of 'Ali al-Sharqi. They also seized another headquarters [unit unspecified] in northern Iraq.

An IRNA correspondent quoted opposition sources as saying that the popular forces engaged in clashes with the Baghdad government troops affiliated with the 2d Infantry Brigade in southeastern 'Ali al-Sharqi in southern Iraq. The mujahidin managed to control the headquarters of this brigade, to capture 20 of its personnel, and to kill or wound a large number of the brigade's personnel.

In a related development, the opposition forces managed to seize another military headquarters in the al-Zubaydat area and to seize four antiaircraft guns and large quantities of light and medium weapons. The correspondent indicated that for the past two days the city of al-Basrah has seen pitched battles between the opposition forces and the government troops. He affirmed that the shelling of the northern city of Karkuk is intensifying and that the government authorities are reinforcing their troops in northern Iraq, especially around the city of Karkuk.

In the city of al-Kahla', heavy bombing by helicopters left a large number of residents martyred. The city has a severe shortage of food, particularly baby milk. Reports confirmed that 350 people were killed when the Iraqi Army's helicopters bombed the Klar suburbs in northeastern Iraq. The reports added that 200 infants died during the past few days in Klar because of the lack of dried milk.

Tehran Radio said that Iraqi helicopters have recently bombed residential areas in Karkuk and Khanaqin, killing or wounding many residents.

The Iraqi opposition sources have affirmed that battles between the popular and government troops continued in northern and southern Iraq. A statement issued by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] said that the Kurdish combatants attacked many government troop concentrations on the Baghdad road in southern Karkuk, and in the Mosul Governorate. The statement added that the Kurdish combatants burned three Sukhoi planes and four helicopters on the Karkuk airport runways, where an Iraqi officer, along with two soldiers, were taken prisoner. In addition, the Kurdish combatants seized one MiG bomber and another Sukhoi bomber that were kept in a shelter near the Khalid barracks in the Karkuk suburb, which is controlled by the popular forces.

Four transport vehicles were destroyed in an ambush at the rear of the regular Iraqi troops. All occupants of the vehicles, including two officers, were killed.

The Iraqi al-Da'wah Party issued a statement saying that Baghdad was the scene of massive demonstrations and clashes between the uprising forces and the regular Iraqi troops yesterday. The party pointed out that the regime's troops began to withdraw from the southern areas in the direction of al-Basrah. The party affirmed that the popular forces managed to regain control of several areas in Karbala', where 300 soldiers joined the uprising.

The Islamic Action Organization issued a statement saying that two MiG planes bombed the areas under the control of the popular uprising forces in the Karbala' Governorate. The organization added that a helicopter gunship assigned by the government authorities to drop toxic gases on the rebellious masses in southern Iraq defected to a destination not identified in the organization's statement. The statement accused the government authorities of burning and blowing up the houses of those taking part in the uprising.

Mass Executions Reported in Al-Najaf

LD2803211691 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] As the Iraqi people's struggle against the government forces intensifies, the Ba'thist regime has carried out a mass execution of anti-government militants in the city of al-Najaf. According to Iraqi refugees who entered the Safwan region, after the executions, the Iraqi forces tied the bodies of Iraqi opposition members to tanks and paraded them in the streets of al-Najaf.

Rebels Free Prisoners in Mosul; Liberation Near

NC2803203591 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1940 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Now that the cities of the north have fallen in the hands of our heroic revolutionaries, the wave of the uprising has reached Mosul, the third largest city in our country. Information received from inside Mosul confirms the continuation of violent fighting between the revolutionaries and the regime's henchmen. An urgent dispatch from Mosul says that the revolutionaries managed to open up one of the regime's prisons in the city and to free 1,000 prisoners from the authorities. Information from the revolutionaries indicates that Mosul could be liberated completely within the next two days, God willing.

Karkuk Purged of 'Agents;' Ibrahim Tours City

NC2803185191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1835 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Mar (INA)—It was announced tonight that the city of Karkuk has been purged of the pockets of agents who are supported by regimes hostile to Iraq.

Iraqi citizens saw a live tour on Baghdad television of the streets and houses of Karkuk after Iraqi forces had ousted the criminal elements of treason and agentry.

'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC], was seen talking and meeting with groups of the city's people who received him with cheers and ululations.

'Massacre' in Al-Qurnah; 22 Guards Captured

LD2803173491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] The Iraqi Republican Guards have massacred the people of al-Qurnah in Iraq. According to the Central News Unit, Radio Monte Carlo announced this and, citing Iraqi opposition sources, added: While setting fire to homes, the guards massacred many of the people of that city and its surrounding villags. The radio gave no indication of the time of these events. However, a fleeing Iraqi soldier who took refuge in Iran today said: Twenty-two officers of the 26th Division of the 6th Corps of the Iraqi Army were captured by popular forces during clashes in the (Hur al-Seyb) region of al-Qurnah.

'Popular Forces' Capture Brigadier General

NC2803135591 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] In al-Basrah, popular forces have captured a bragadier general in command of the 5th Division, along with a large number of his senior officers. In al-'Amarah, the popular forces captured the head of the subdistrict of al-Kahla', together with another 40 government officials in the governorate. [passage omitted]

Life Returning to Normal 'Throughout' Al-Ta'mim

NC2803214591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2020 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 28 Mar (INA)—The INA correspondent in Karkuk, 220 km north of Baghdad, has reported that life has begun to return to normal throughout the al-Ta'mim Governorate after the Armed Forces completely and totaly purged the city of the elements of sabotage and agentry before noon today.

'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council, made an inspection tour of Karkuk's quarters and met with a number of the inhabitants and families. [passage omitted]

Issues To Be Discussed at Assembly Session Viewed

NC2803143891 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 28 Mar 91 p 15

["Exclusive" report]

[Text] Baghdad—Iraq has reaffirmed its full desire to establish a democratic multiparty system and to implement various previous decisions by establishing an independent Parliamentary system, ensuring freedom of the press, allowing the publication of new newspapers, securing public freedoms, and holding a referendum on constitutional amendments. Iraqi National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih has called for an emergency meeting of all assembly members for Saturday [not further clarified]. The participants plan to endorse several laws, including amendments to the Constitution allowing for a multiparty system, freedom of the press, public liberties, popularization of democracy, and the transformation of the country into a stronghold of democracy and respect of citizens rights.

Iraqi sources said the National Assembly will call for a referendum on the new Constitution.

It was announced in Iraq that Iraqi President Saddam Husayn has stressed the need to implement decisions on public freedoms, the multiparty system, and freedom of the press. He also instructed the culture and information minister to license new party and nonparty newspapers immediately following the National Assembly's approval of these decisions. A referendum will then be held for the people to freely and democratically elect their representatives.

Baghdad reports say that President Saddam Husayn is firmly determined that the president of the Republic be directly elected by the people in a secret ballot. The new Constitution stipulates that the presidential term is five years.

Iraqi sources said these decisions will be implemented within the next two months. The quick Iraqi movement toward democracy responds to the people's demands and serves Iraq's crucial and pan-Arab causes.

The Iraqi measures were widely welcomed by all Iraqi factions as well as Western and other world capitals.

Last Tuesday, Iraq decided to participate in Saturday's Arab League Council meeting. It will be the first Arab meeting Iraq has attended since last August.

Iraq's decision to participate was largely welcomed in Arab capitals because it indicates a determination to restore the unity of Arab ranks and resolve differences within the Arab household. It also indicated Iraq's desire to forget the past, unify stands, and restore the spirit of Arab brotherhood.

Al-Kut Dam Repaired, Operating

NC2803152791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1305 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Mar (INA)—The al-Kut irrigation dam began operating today after the parts damaged by the coalition forces air attacks and rockets were repaired.

The dam, located near the city of al-Kut southeast of Baghdad, is used to raise the water level in the Tigris River for land irrigation north of the river up to Baghdad and in [words indistinct] in river transport between al-Basrah and Baghdad.

Newspapers Comment on Country-Wide Situation

AL-JUMHURIYAH on 'Rioting'

NC2903090391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 29 Mar (INA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH says that foreign quarters chose the fourth day of the ground aggression against Iraq as the date for unleashing acts of rioting.

In an exclusive statement by an informed source, AL-JUMHURIYAH says that the Iraqi authorities have seized important documents proving that the bloody and criminal incidents that occurred in central and southern Iraq were planned to start on the fourth day of the U.S. ground aggression against Iraq.

The source disclosed that the timing was chosen through coordination between the parties to the military aggression against Iraq and [words indistinct] in such a way that the acts of rioting, looting, and murder would be carried out simultaneously to complement the dimensions and consequences of the foreign military aggression.

The source added that these documents reveal much about the plot to sabotage the Iraqi economy and the state's main installations in a way that would lead to the loss of the citizens' rights and the complete destruction of all records.

The source said that the aim behind these sabotage operations was to destroy all records to enable infiltrators from outside Iraq to assimilate into Iraqi society.

AL-JUMHURIYAH on 'New Phase'

NC2803214791 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1551 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] In an editorial entitled "The Law Is Supreme," published this morning, AL-JUMHURIYAH says: The law is supreme and all the Iraqis are equal under the law during the current phase that is the beginning for the new nationalist Iraqi life. What we have just said is not a mere slogan for local consumption or mere words to reflect what people are thinking. It is a fact and (?we hope that) everyone, each from his own position, will make it an established fact that satisfies himself and his conscience, so that our new phase can be based on firm foundations with a strong structure. Our performance should rise to the level of our aspirations and thus form concrete achievements that our great homeland, Iraq, deserves, and our generations as well as future generations can boast about it.

Despite the general goodwill and sincere intentions, we expect some to find loopholes in this new way of life. We expect some people to practice nepotism and thus turn (?the supremacy of the law) into a slogan rather than a code of conduct. The difference between a slogan and an enforced law is great, for slogans can be meaningless if put into practice. However, everyone should be aware that such attempts will be useless. We need to remain true to our word. We must make serious and concerted efforts to prevent any symptoms that seem to contradict the truth we seek.

In this new national phase, everyone should accede to their positions on the basis of merit, not nepotism, luck, or friendship. Everyone should give his effort, time, and struggle for the great Iraq so that it will remain (?stable) and excellent.

The law should remain supreme, for we are at the threshold of a new constitutional phase in which everything should assume its normal size or be restored to its normal size. There are things that have been inflated, because the person in charge imagines that he deserves a great (?post). It must be understood that the inflated importance of any such thing is a disease, a cancerous growth that has no place in our new society in which everything will return to its normal size. We should be content to provide the country with our efforts and sacrifice. We do not need to exchange favors at the expense of others or inflate the importance of our words and concoct slogans (?in the absence of efforts that produce concrete outcome).

President leader Saddam Husayn, in his speech yesterday to the cabinet members, explained this fact and outlined the new phase. Therefore, all the topics whose discussion had been postponed are now out in the open. The (?topic of the) press has been enriched with that new and open spirit. It will become a source for the expression of opinions, and for reviewing useful developments and unmasking the [word indistinct].

Let us all rise to the level of the new phase and prove ourselves capable of coping with our roles in that phase. Iraq deserves our best and we deserve to live a proud life in a proud country.

AL-QADISIYAH on Settling Scores

NC2803094491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Mar (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH says that Iraq will take into account in the next stage the conspiratorial attempts that neighboring regimes are inciting and participating in.

In an article today, AL-QADISIYAH, mouthpiece of the Defense Ministry, adds that one of the focal points in Iraq's policymaking in the next era will be devoted to ending any doubts about the intentions of these countries.

The paper adds that (?Iraq will take into consideration) the traditional rancor harbored against it by these neighboring countries and their ambitions regarding its wealth.

The paper stresses that the Iraqi people, Army, and command will not forget to settle scores with these countries.

The paper adds that when these regimes declare their malevolent objectives toward Iraq and wager on its being debilitated after having come out of the ordeal of the U.S.-Atlantic aggression, they stupidly forget that Iraq, thanks to its human and natural resources and the huge expanse of land [words indistinct] and constitutes an influencing force within its regional sphere which cannot be bypassed or overlooked.

AL-QADISIYAH draws the attention of the neighboring countries which have conspired against Iraq that they will see afterwards how superpowers will be compelled to deal with Iraq in any issue which concerns the region and its security.

AL-THAWRAH on U.S. 'Aggression'

NC2803183091 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 26 Mar 91 pp 1, 7

[Editorial: "With Our People's Awareness and Immunity We Foil the Scheme of the Foreigner and his Agents"]

[Text] At a time when the real objectives and motives of the Zionist-imperialist plan of aggression and conspiracy against our people and nation have become very clear, and when more pages and tools of this plan are being revealed, at this time in particular our people's awareness and principled stand become clear. At this particular time our people's solidarity with their courageous historic leadership and heroic Armed Forces also becomes very clear. Moreover, our people's determination to foil the plan of the foreigner and his agents of traitors and adventurers and suppress any attempt to strike Iraq's unity and destroy it intensifies.

What occurred in some southern Iraqi cities and what has taken place in some northern cities since the cessation of military operations is a continuation of the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist aggression with new forms and tools. It is no coincidence that all these hoards and gangs of traitors and hateful people infiltrated from a neighboring country to perpetrate murders, destruction, burning, and plundering at a time when the threat of resuming aggression still stands and foreign forces are still present on our land. It is the same evil plan that aims at destroying Iraq, fragmenting it, and sowing frustration among its sons.

When the enemies found that direct military action failed to accomplish the strategic objectives of their aggression they resorted to another page in their plan. This page is to stir hateful seditions and raise slogans of sectarianism and pan-Arab divisions. Meanwhile, the U.S. Administration unveiled its desire to dominate and impose its ambitions to plunder and control. It practiced a new form of dictatorship aimed at denying Iraq its sovereignty and mortgaging its will and wealth. This is the essence of the U.S. Administration's draft resolution for a final cease-fire in the Gulf.

At any rate, despite all the ugly crimes and barbaric actions perpetrated by the traitors clique and demagogs against the security of our people and their wealth and possessions, these criminal cliques have failed to strike the will of the glorious Iraqis who have been hardened by experiences, and who have earlier realized that slogans of sectarianism and pan-Arab divisions are old cards that have been excessively used by Iraq's enemies in their continuous feverish plotting against the July revolution and its leadership. Indeed, out of their expertise, awareness, and political experiment, the Iraqi people knew the hateful reality and essence of these slogans, and the identity of those who came from behind the borders to raise them. Their only objective is to destroy Iraq, fragment it, and harm its proud people.

While confronting all pages and tools of the plan of aggression and conspiracy, our steadfast people proved and continue to prove daily that their determination is stronger than imagined by their enemies and their agents. Moreover, our people continue to prove that their political awareness and principled immunity are more impregnable than ever before. Our people have tangible proof that no power can destroy their national and pan-Arab will to progress and advance or sow frustration among their ranks. The people's awareness, principles, and unified and cohesive will—not to mention that their victorious revolutionary march has all the signs for continuation and steadfastness—altogether

ensures that the plans of the foreigner and his adventurous agents who are driven by hate, treason, and demagogy at the expense of the people's interest and the homeland's pride will be foiled.

The blessed July revolution, during earlier stages of its march, faced slogans of sectarianism and pan-Arab divisions. On all those occasions it was able to overwhelmingly defeat these slogans and those trading in on them, protect Iraq, safeguard the unity of its people and soil, and thwart all wagers of traitors, agents, and their masters outside the borders. Here are the masses of our struggling people, our brave Armed Forces, and unique leadership firmly, strongly, and with a unified will confronting those adventurous agents who did not learn a lesson, so it seems, from the experiences of the traitors who preceded them. Thus, the sedition in the south has been crushed and it is only a matter of days before what is left of the roots of the sedition and sabotage is uprooted, and the new but old page of the plan of aggression and conspiracy is thwarted.

We are very confident that our vigilant and protected people, led by the victorious Armed Forces which recorded the splendid challenges and heroic steadfastness are very capable of teaching a lesson to and foiling the conspiracy of agents and demagogs who infiltrated from behind borders and proceeded on the road of treason and deception. This is what is taking place now. What the 30-country aggression failed to accomplish, neither the traitors or saboteurs, nor all methods of pressure, intimidation, or blackmail would be able to accomplish.

Talk Discusses New Democratic Liberties

NC2803161591 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1014 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] On (?3) April, the National Assembly will begin its meetings for the spring term. This term will be devoted to an in-depth discussion of the principles and bases of the new democratic phase that will see the final endorsement of the draft Constitution, public liberties unleashed, and a multiparty system initiated. During this phase political and social organizations and societies will be authorized in a way that will expand the masses' participation in managing the country's affairs in accordance with the course of the revolution as spelled out by its leadership.

We find it necessary to highlight several topics that will rejuvenate discussions and [words indistinct] in direct contact with the traits and characteristics of the new phase. The objective is to produce results in proportion to the persistent efforts made and the discussions held at the popular and legislative levels. These results should be in harmony with the desires of the public and the course of the revolution.

One of the important things that should be highlighted and emphasized is the need to brush aside superficial discussions and traditional frameworks. Outmoded formulas should be abandoned without reluctance and [words indistinct]. This means that free and democratic discussions, whether they are held in the National Assembly, by the general public, or by various types of the news media should be marked by a depth that reflects an awareness of all basics, details, and aspects of the reality. Such discussions should deal with the new facts and realities, using a perspective that does not remain content with [words indistinct].

In democratic practices and open discussions that are supposed to be in full swing at all levels, we first and foremost need to demonstrate a democratic spirit and to express frank and clear opinions and responsible positions on all the topics and issues contained in the draft Constitution, particularly those related to the people's democratic rights. This is because reluctance to express opinions and the failure to be courageous in diagnosing any pitfalls or conditions will not help us meet the challenges in the new phase. Likewise, such things contravene in form and substance the basics of the democratic approach. Indeed, such a thing constitutes a [words indistinct] against the very democracy [words indistinct].

The people's representatives, members of the National Assembly, shoulder at this phase a historic responsibility before the people and the public who elected them to be their voice expressing their will. Such responsibilities require them to use their intellectual and political capabilities to their limit in order to deepen and enrich their deliberations. Such deliberations should be clear and courageous. Moreover, in its capacity as a legislative body the National Assembly should take the initiative in raising the ideas and proposals they deem appropriate. Besides, its discussions should also involve the public. All of the news media can be used to help deepen and enlighten their deliberations, a matter which should benefit the finalization of the draft Constitution.

While highlighting these topics related to the work of the National Assembly and public discussions, which will be held at the masses' level, such as [word indistinct], we hope that all official agencies will continue to accord special seriousness and attention to the deliberations and to raise ideas, opinions, and attitudes and to consider them [words indistinct] to help come up with a panoramic view of the people's will and also to ensure that sound pillars for democratic rights are erected. Additionally, this will help our country develop in the direction of progress, prosperity, and efficiency. We are quite sure that our great people, who have held out in the face of the aggression and defied the whole conspiratorial scheme by displaying an immensely strong patriotic spirit; and despite all the difficulties they are facing in their daily life, which is an emergency situation, will engage in the new democratic phase, with all the transient [words indistinct] entailed, showing greater might and a determination that is stronger than ever before. The Iraqis will make tremendous efforts and use their clever minds to rebuild and reconstruct what the aggression destroyed [words indistinct] and to expose the crimes [words indistinct] treason coming from outside the borders.

Shamir Interviewed on Security, Peace Process

TA2903112291 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (PESAH supplement) in Hebrew 29 Mar 91 pp 6, 7

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Dan Shilon; place and date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Shilon] After each terrorist attack, you promise: "We will cut off the arm that took a Jewish life," but in fact, the murderers' arms are becoming longer.
[Shamir] There are problems, there are perils, and we have enemies. It is a fact. The war against Jewish existence in Eretz Yisra'el has not ended. So what? Do not millions of Jews live here, and is not their number growing constantly? Why must we sink in unjustified despair? With all the pain for the loss of human life and for this or that murder, we should not forget that we are talking about a few people only.

[Shilon] Even your own minister Ari'el Sharon says there is no government in this country.
[Shamir] Anyone can see this is a gross exaggeration. If there is no government, who is ruling? And if there is no government, how can anyone be a member in it?

[Shilon] The "anyone" is Sharon. Are you implying that he should draw personal conclusions?
[Shamir] This is not my business. However, the State of Israel exists, and there is a government, and there is security, and there are problems, but there is also inclination to irritability, overstating, and exaggeration.

[Shilon] Sharon has affirmed that he can solve the security problems. Why don't you try him?
[Shamir] I am not going to make changes in my Cabinet today.

[Shilon] Let us discuss practical solutions. Is the idea to close the territories to single men an appropriate solution?
[Shamir] There is always a considerable distance between ideas, and decisions and implementation. No one is checking the marital state of Arab or Jews. The closure of the territories is a very complex option. It can be imposed for a day or two or three, but not longer—and this has nothing to do with my political positions.

[Shilon] Is the deportation of Palestinian leaders from the territories the measure that will bring about calm?
[Shamir] Deportations are an effective deterrent measure. The situation would have been worse without deportations.

[Shilon] Deportations at the cost of marring our relations with the United States?
[Shamir] I hope they will not affect our relations with the United States. The Americans know Israel must take care of its security. We have occasional arguments on the issue, but we are the ones who have to see to our security in the final count.

[Shilon] This is not the conclusion of the Gulf war. When Israelis found themselves exposed to missile attacks, alien elements insisted on taking care of their security, which they did without any great success.
[Shamir] We face many security problems, and they are not new. They were born with our birth as a nation; they have existed ever since we came to this country. The last episode is merely a sequence to all the preceding chapters. For years, we have fortified our forbearance, our power, and our security.

[Shilon] Will we, in the meantime, remain exposed to missile attacks without being able to provide an appropriate response?
[Shamir] We have answers, and even during the Gulf war, we had answers to the missile threat. If we did not resort to the means at our disposal, it was because we estimated that at that time, they were unnecessary and that it was preferable to rely on the means of others. We are neither stupid nor helpless.

[Shilon] These days, the state comptroller is in the process of exposing another security fiasco: the distribution of defective gas masks to the population.
[Shamir] On this matter, I tend to believe the chief of staff's statement. I trust him, and I believe he will be able to convince everyone that he is right.

[Shilon] It is the same chief of staff who said that "peace is more important than territories." Do you trust him on this point as well?
[Shamir] I do not think he said that. He did not mean it, and he certainly did not intend to voice a political stand.

[Shilon] To the point: Isn't peace worth the territories?
[Shamir] Peace, security, and territories are interconnected. They are what a nation's strength is gauged by. Larger territory, bigger population, and stronger economy all indicate the nation's strength.

[Shilon] Will this nation's strength be impaired if a territorial concession is made in exchange for peace, in which you, Yitzhaq Shamir, believe?
[Shamir] I know of no nation anywhere in the world prepared to make territorial compromises. I know of no country in the world constantly preoccupied with the question of what to do with the territories that are in its possession and under its sovereignty. Why should we be an exception?

[Shilon] Are you stating that the territories are not an issue for negotiations?
[Shamir] I have not said so, and we cannot say so, because of the agreements we have signed: the Camp David accords, which are based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. When we reach negotiations, and if I still have clout, I will try to effect negotiations out of which we emerge unscathed and as strong as we entered them.

[Shilon] Do you not see the contradiction in what you have said? Are not the Camp David accords, which Israel

had signed, based on a UN resolution speaking plainly of the restitution of "territories"?
[Shamir] There is no contradiction. To date, no one has come up with a better solution on how to achieve peace between us and the Arabs than the agreement we signed with Egypt. Neither we nor the Egyptians ceded any principles. It was the only way we could sign the agreement.

[Shilon] Did we sign without intending to consummate it?
[Shamir] None of us signed anything he did not intend to consummate. Israel abides by all its international commitments, including the financial ones.

[Shilon] How will you respond to the signals of James Baker, who expects Israel to make political gestures?
[Shamir] We are trying to reach negotiations with our neighbors and will continue doing so.

[Shilon] Will this attempt include your consent to meet with the Palestinian leaders whom Baker met during his visit here?
[Shamir] Our approach is based on two-track activity: the normalization of Israel's relations with Arab countries, and interim arrangements between Israel and the residents of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

[Shilon] Can the residents of Judaea and Samaria be represented by Faysal al-Husayni?
[Shamir] People who do not recognize the Camp David accords and reject the two-track approach cannot be party to negotiations. Talking with PLO supporters is useless and pointless.

[Shilon] Are you thus ruling out Faysal al-Husayni and his associates?
[Shamir] Oh, well, I am familiar with their views. They say they are speaking on behalf of the PLO. There is no point in conducting negotiations with them.

[Shilon] These days it is difficult to find Arabs in the territories who are not PLO supporters.
[Shamir] It is because of the terror.

[Shilon] The terror is going on, and these peoples' identification with the PLO persists. Does this mean that we are doomed to a profound political freeze?
[Shamir] The duration of the stalemate works against them, not us. From their viewpoint, they would be well advised to adopt our approach to peace.

[Shilon] What can be done if they refuse? The violence continues, and their approach to peace is totally different from yours.
[Shamir] I think we will overcome the current situation. There is no stalemate. Their violence will peter out. They have to realize that it only damages them. In a few years, you will be surprised at having ever asked this question.

[Shilon] Talking of the track of normalization with the Arab countries, have you received any signs that King Husayn became a partner for negotiations in the wake of the Gulf war?

[Shamir] I cannot speak in his behalf, but various people with whom I have spoken told me that this assumption is not baseless. There are encouraging signs testifying to this. Nowadays, there is greater willingness to accept Israel. It may take time, but there has been positive progress.

[Shilon] Why don't you invite him to Jerusalem right after Passover?
[Shamir] I do not believe in ostentatious declarations. If I could do something tangible that would bring King Husayn to Jerusalem, I would do it, but I will avoid declarations.

[Shilon] Foreign press says you have already met with him.
[Shamir] Foreign press says many things about me, most of them untrue.

[Shilon] And in this case?
[Shamir] This case is no exception.

[Shilon] In an earlier interview conducted about a year ago, you did not rule out outright the possibility of territorial concessions in the Golan Heights in return for peace with Syria.
[Shamir] I have never said we could discuss territory with Syria. I take care not to discuss territory. Territory is part of the nation's soul. Discussing territory with people stabs me in the heart. I cannot even talk about it; it is part of my existence, part of myself. [passage omitted]

Discusses Regional, Domestic Issues

TA2903083991 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 29 Mar 91 p 7

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by David Makovsky; date and place not given—Makovsky's questions in boldface]

[Text] **Q: The Iraqi war machine has been destroyed, Israel has peace with Egypt, the Soviets have trouble fully resupplying Syria, and the U.S. is the only superpower in the region. Has Israel ever been as secure?**
A: Of course, the dangers you mentioned do not exist anymore, but we are still exposed to others. The first is the reality of our environment, our geographical situation.

Are these threats to Israel's existence?
Terrorism does not frighten us; we are able to defend ourselves against it, but there is a constant threat to our existence. The prevailing mood among our neighbors is hostility, and it could one day find expression. I would not exclude anybody.

Even the Egyptians?
I would advise you to read the Egyptian press. You will not find any friendly remark about Israel.

What lessons did you learn from the Gulf war?

I think it is too early to draw lessons. It is another aspect of this reality which we have to be accustomed to: the reality of hostility. Nobody imagined that Iraq, in its drive to invade Kuwait, would involve Israel. There was not any logic (to this). It happened because of their basic hostility toward us.

Some of your ministers have spoken about the historic opportunity Israel has. Are we now facing an historic chance for peace and if so, how long is the "window of opportunity" open?
Lets leave this expression. I do not know if there is a window, a door or a gate, but there is a special situation to which we are exposed. Arab countries have been involved in a war against another Arab country. Aggression was defeated. All the Arab countries have had this opportunity to see they are exposed to dangers not from the Jewish State, but from another Arab state. Reason dictates that it is time to draw some conclusions and cease this state of hostility with Israel. But we have seen that logic does not prevail in our area.

How long is the opportunity we have? Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Butrus Ghali, has said we only have until 1992.
Maybe there is hope to use this opportunity after such a war, and change something in our area. But on one condition—if it is feasible, if it could be realistic. Maybe Butrus Ghali has such a feeling, but I do not think it is a question of a period of time.

What would you like to see happen inside Iraq? Would you like to see Saddam fall; the Kurds do well?
I am not ready to make any comments. What happens there has nothing to do with our situation.

You say Israel should negotiate with Syria without preconditions, but in the Knesset you said Syria can raise the issue of the Golan and we will say no. Does this suggest you don't want to negotiate in good faith?
This is the situation as it is. We are always ready to negotiate in good faith, but if you ask me now if there is a chance to change the territorial situation with Syria, my answer would be negative. This is the reality.

Is UN resolution 242 the basis for our negotiations with Syria?
You know, I said what I said about the reality, not about any paragraphs. (Resolution) 242 is a special issue.

What about demilitarization of the Golan or a defense treaty with the U.S.?
We will consider ideas from anybody, but realistically speaking, I do not see any chance for changing the territorial situation with Syria. We know what Syria is about. We know about the aspirations of Syria. Do you know of any other country in the world that is ready at any moment to consider changes of its territory? I do not.

You have said you would consider inviting Jordan back into the peace process if it changes its stance. What did you mean by that?
I did not say it as a condition, but it is a hope that Jordan will no longer be on the side of Saddam Husayn; otherwise, they will not come to any negotiations that would be against the theory of Saddam Husayn and people like him. It has been our view since Camp David that it is vital that Jordan, as our neighbor, participate in any negotiations about progress toward peace.

Do you think King Husayn will be able to go back to pre-July 1988, when he severed ties with the West Bank?
I do not know. I do not see any difficulties in that.

What role do you see Egypt playing?
In our view, Egypt has to play a very important role in any peace process with Israel, because Egypt was the first country to make peace with us.

Could they approach the Saudis or the Kuwaitis?
Everybody. Egypt is maybe the most important country among the members of the Arab League. Anyway, they consider themselves the first Arab country in the world, so they have to be active in this direction.

When you say parallel track—talks with Palestinians alongside talks with Arab states—does this mean that progress on talks with extreme Arab states such as Libya, or would it be enough for there to be progress with the Saudis or Kuwaitis?
It would not be enough, but it would be very important to add another Arab country or countries that would (find it) necessary to have peaceful relations with Israel. This would have a tremendous impact on peace in our area.

Would you hold up progress on the Palestinian issue because of some of these recalcitrant countries?
It is a part of the issue. I would say that peace with Arab countries is no less important than settlement of the Palestinian issue.

You mean, without peace with Yemen for example, we will not make peace with the Palestinians?
Peaceful relations with Arab countries are very important.

What about a Middle East version of the Helsinki-style convention (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) format that brings together peace, arms control, economics, human rights? We hear the U.S. might be floating such an idea.
We do not attach great importance to any special diplomatic arrangements. For us, the most important aspect of such a peace process is direct negotiations between us and any Arab country. I do not know if the Helsinki formula could be helpful for such a process. Our situation is not a matter for discussions of a general character. It is rather a matter of special, thorough talks with every Arab country. **But are you not ruling it out?**
I do not see what would be the use of it. The bilateral format is the most important.

You always say Israel must have direct talks without preconditions. However, when it came to Egypt, Israel

secretly held talks with the Egyptians promised them the Sinai before Sadat even arrived.
Well, (speaking in general terms) there are no rules for such a process. But the main thing is how to come toward positive results.

Are the Americans being hypocritical about arms control? They talk about the dangerous quantities of weaponry in the region, and at the same time have announced they want to sell $14 billion worth to the Saudis during the post-war period.
There are some discrepancies. There are some differences of views. I think Israel is the only country, for the moment, (which said) before we have started any real serious negotiations about reduction of arms, that is interested in the reduction of the race for conventional arms. [sentence as published]

However, the U.S. and the Arabs have talked about starting arms control with non-conventional weaponry—nuclear, chemical and biological.
The main danger that threatens us is by conventional arms. We have against us the massive armaments of Arab countries in the area, who have more arms than Israel alone. We want limitations on this.

Would we not agree to begin non-conventional talks, unless we talked conventional weapons first?
We have not started any serious discussions about it but, in my view, these discussions have to include conventional and non-conventional arms.

Defense Minister Moshe Arens said any cap on conventional weapons would mean Israel would not be able to buy certain hi-tech weaponry from the U.S. Do you agree to this?
Yes, of course.

President Bush has spoken about land for peace. If Israel had security arrangements, such as early-warning systems in the West Bank and would only have to cede territory once it was assured of a real peace; under those conditions, would you agree to territorial compromise on the West Bank?
We are interested in peace. We are not seeking new formulas. In our view, the most realistic and reasonable way that could lead to peace in our area is the Camp David agreements. The intent of our peace initiative of May 1989 is this two-track approach: normalization between Israel and Arab countries, and interim arrangements with the Palestinians. This is the most realistic way. I could not see another. I think it is very important to convince all the partners to such a process that this is the only way. They should not look for other ways, if we want to be practical. If you are interested in discussing just for the sake of discussion, then you can discuss things until I do not know how long. But if we want to be practical, we have to take only this way.

But former generals such as Yitzhaq Rabin and Mordekhay Gur say territories for peace is safe, and even (IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Chief of Staff Dan) Shomron recently suggested this, so long as there is adequate security arrangements and peace.
I have told you my view.

You said last week you would not talk with the 10 Palestinians who met with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. What is your profile of a moderate Palestinian that you would speak to?
I am not interested in finding any special definition. I say that it is worthwhile to negotiate with Palestinians, within the framework of our proposals—the Camp David agreement or our peace initiative (of May 1989). From this point of view, it is necessary and important to speak with Palestinians who accept this principal of ours. It means interim arrangements with Palestinians in the direction of the Camp David agreements or the peace initiative of May 1989. I said it will not be useful to talk to people like Faysal al-Husayni and his colleagues, who do not support this approach.

But if they would talk along the lines of Israel's proposals, they would be okay?
I have nothing against them personally. The question is their views, their opinions, their convictions. It is useless to speak to people if they do not accept the principle of this framework. Without it, nothing will advance. They have to accept our framework.

So the question is not whether they support the PLO or not?/
The PLO is against our approach, against the Camp David Accords and our peace initiative. That's all.

If there were elections in the territories, do you see a force that could run and win that is not PLO or Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement].
There are many Palestinians, I hope, who would accept that the only way to peace in our area is this two-track (negotiations).

So you do not care if they are Palestinian nationalists, as long as they concentrate for the time being on the interim phase?
They have to accept our approach.

Baker came here asking for Israeli confidence-building gestures on the Palestinian issue.
If it will serve this approach, we will accept it and try to go along with it.

Can you be specific about what gestures Israel may make?
I do not think it could be useful to talk about details before there is a new and serious discussion.

Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon has said his ministry is going to build 13,000 housing units during the next two years in the territories. Is that figure accurate?
I do not know about the numbers. We never decided about quantities.

He said it passed the Knesset finance committee.

Maybe. I do not know the details of all these plans. I do not remember any such decisions in the various committees of the government. We have never decided anything against [last word printed in italics] the creation of settlements.

The costs of Soviet Jewish absorption are staggering. Can Israel pay for it without receiving more U.S.-backed housing guarantees?
We need help from many sources and I am sure we will get it. I do not know yet how and when, but I am sure we will get it because it is an historical necessity.

I want to ask you about your personal involvement in the absorption issue. This week, for the first time, there were Soviet immigrants demonstrating outside your office, calling for "bread and work."
It is not surprising for us that there are, and would be, difficulties in this long and complicated process of absorption. I would say it is hutzpa for a small country like ours to embark on such an undertaking and decide we will be able to absorb such numbers in a very short time. We have decided to do it, and we will have to do it, and therefore we are facing difficulties. We must find a way to overcome these difficulties.

Ari'el Sharon, head of the aliya cabinet, said you were not personally involved enough and have failed to intervene when there are disagreements between cabinet ministers on the issue of absorption.
I tried to find the best way for cooperation between the various ministries and ministers. For me, this is a precondition for our success, that all our ministers should work together on a daily basis. Otherwise, we will not succeed.

How much do you care about public opinion? There are a few examples of concern. We checked with the White House, and George Bush, who entered office about the same time you did, has given 86 press conferences. Is there a chance the press could have more access to you? British Prime Minister John Major answers questions in parliament every week, but you do not go to the Knesset. Last year, 600,000 people signed a petition on electoral reform. Not only did you not implement any change; the feeling is you did not even address the issues because you were too worried about your coalition. To rephrase this last point: Is Israel too politicized; are the tiny parties more important than the broader public?
Every country has its own public life and its own political life, and I think ours is not the easiest among the lives of the countries you mentioned. Therefore, there is a justification for our public ways of handling the issues.

I want to pursue the issue of politicization. A couple of examples: The farming lobby in the Knesset sets the price of water, and according to the State Comptroller, this has meant water has been mismanaged for the past 25 years. Also, why does your office, by way of your aide, Police Affairs Minister Roni Milo, have the final say on who is going to head the new Channel 2? Why should the prime minister in a democratic country make such a decision?
Roni Milo helps me in fulfilling this function of directing, that is, handling or managing the TV and radio. It is in accordance with our rules and laws.

Your critics cite an interview that you once gave, saying that your vision for the future is simply keeping things quiet. Is this indeed your vision? Do you have the energy to run for another term?
I have a certain vision of the State of Israel and the people of Israel, and it has nothing to do with my personal future. I do not think about it now (of running again). What I am looking for is a quiet life for the State of Israel, but constant advancement toward establishing peace between us and our neighbors and improving to a great extend our economy.

A happy Pessah, Mr. Prime Minister.
A happy Pessah to the entire House of Israel.

Shoval: Political Process Depends on Arab Side

TA2803191291 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Israel's Ambassador to the United States Zalman Shoval has said that, at this point, Israel has not heard of any clear gestures that the Arab side is prepared to make to promote the peace process. The ambassador also said that, at this time, Israel is not being asked to reply to any questions from the U.S. Administration.

Mr. Shoval this evening briefed the prime minister in Jerusalem about his meeting with James Baker, and later spoke to our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Halperin.

[Begin recording] [Halperin] Mr. Shoval, do you think there is a basis for a promising political process at the moment?

[Shoval] Absolutely. Of course, this depends to a large extent on the Arab side. If we talk about confidence-building measures [preceding three words in English] and of a dual-track course, we are still awaiting the Arab course.

[Halperin] Does this mean that the Arabs have not yet shown a willingness to make any confidence-building gestures?

[Shoval] We do not know. At this point we have not yet heard about any specific gestures, and not just gestures but other steps as well. As far as Israel is concerned, the willingness exists. Moreover, there is a desire to promote the process. This certainly also exists on the part of the United States.

[Halperin] Has Israel been asked to make any gestures of its own, such as revoking the deportation orders and releasing prisoners from the territories?

[Shoval] No specific requests have been issued yet, beyond the issues discussed during Secretary Baker's visit to Israel.

[Halperin] What about the proposal for an opening conference in either Cairo or Washington with the participation of Israel, various Arab countries, and the Palestinians to be followed by direct negotiations?

[Shoval] I have not heard any such notions.

[Halperin] Did Baker not raise such a proposal?

[Shoval] No, definitely not.

[Halperin] Will you be taking Baker any answers from the prime minister and the foreign minister?

[Shoval] No specific questions have been asked that call for specific answers. This is an ongoing process of clarifications which will continue in the hope that all of us together—that is, the Arabs, the United States, and Israel—arrive at a successful agreement. [end recording]

Reply to Mubarak To Be Given in 'Next Few Days'

TA2903104991 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1000 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Israel will, in the next few days, send a detailed reply to President Mubarak's message on the peace process. Sources in Jerusalem say that the letter repeats known Egyptian positions on the peace process, but in some respects the tone is milder than in the past. Jack Katzenell reports:

Officials in Jerusalem are studying President Mubarak's letter very carefully. In the next few days, a detailed reply will be sent. Mubarak urged Israel not to miss the opportunity presented in the wake of the Gulf war to advance the peace process. Israel should take advantage of the positive atmosphere prevailing in the region, the Egyptian president writes.

Specifically, he calls on Israel to agree to an international conference on the Middle East, although sources in Jerusalem say this part of the letter is not couched in such strong terms as in the past. The letter envisages that Israel would hold parallel negotiations with the Arab countries and the Palestinians. There is no mention of a preparatory conference in Cairo, but the letter advocates negotiations on the model of the peace talks with Egypt; in other words, territory for peace.

Mubarak also calls for the removal of weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East, and the establishment of a system of international supervision.

Foreign Ministry 'Regrets' UNSC Chiding

TA2903101891 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 29 Mar 91 p 2

[Report by Asher Wallfish in Jerusalem and Jonathan Schachter in New York]

[Excerpt] Jerusalem yesterday politely shrugged off the UN Security Council [UNSC] president's statement of Wednesday night [27 March] chiding Israel for deciding to deport four Gaza Palestinians.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Yosi 'Amihud called the presidential statement of regret "selective censure-...which has necessitated Israel's response."

A statement released by the Israeli UN mission after the council vote said that Israel "regrets" the statement.

'Amihud noted that terrorists have killed six Israelis and wounded 11 more in a wave of stabbing attacks since the end of the Gulf war. He called the deportations "a last resort," stressing that the law in force in the territories enables deportations and that the Supreme Court had upheld the measure in a precedent-making judgment.

Deportations help reduce the level of violence and restore calm, he said. Two of the four to be deported are convicted murderers, and three were released in a mass prisoner exchange while promising to refrain from violence and incitement.

THE JERUSALEM POST has learned that the Defense Ministry weighed a proposal to expel 10 Palestinians—including the four Gazans—prior to Foreign Minister David Levi's recent visit to Washington and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's subsequent visit here. It is understood that no action was taken at the time because of the proximity of the two high-level visits. [passage omitted]

Defense Sources Deny Knowledge of Zikhroni Efforts

TA2903081791 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 29 Mar 91 p A2

[Report by Barukh Me'iri]

[Excerpt] Attorney Amnon Zikhroni will leave for Moscow and Geneva in a few days to hold another round of talks on the release of the hostages held by the Iranians. Zikhroni is acting upon the instructions of official Israeli elements. Most of his efforts will be devoted to effecting an eventual release of the Israeli POW's who have been held captive for a long time by terrorist organizations affiliated with Iran. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew on 29 March in a page 2 report by Alex Fishman and the news agencies adds: "The results of inquiries conducted at the Defense Ministry yesterday indicate that there is no knowledge of any mission that attorney Zikhroni is carrying out on behalf of the Defense Ministry or the Army. This was the reaction of Defense Ministry sources to reports published yesterday that Zikhroni had recently met in Geneva with Iranian officials and in Moscow with Soviet officials. The Defense Ministry has no information so far about Zikhroni's meetings or the issues that were discussed.

["The reports of Zikhroni's trips asserted that his talks dealt with the issue of Israeli Army POW's in Lebanon.

As yet, there have been no developments in the situation that could indicate any turning point in contacts with elements linked to the MIA's and POW's."]

3 'Terrorists' Killed Near Jordanian Border

TA2903044291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0400 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Three terrorists, who infiltrated into Israel north of Jericho overnight, have been killed in a clash with IDF [Israel Defense Forces] units. There were no Israeli casualties. Arab residents of the territories have been banned from entering Jerusalem until Sunday. Mark Weiss reports:

The three terrorists infiltrated across the River Jordan after midnight east of the settlement of Niran, north of Jericho. The terrorists were spotted by an Israeli Army unit, who gave chase. A combination of reservists and paratroopers took part in the encounter and all three terrorists were killed before reaching the main Jordan Valley road. There were no Israeli casualties. The terrorists were aged 20, 15, and 12. They had a knife, but no guns.

The head of Central Command, Major General Dani Yatom, arrived on the scene and praised the speedy action of the soldiers. This is the seventh incident on the border with Jordan since the beginning of the year. [passage omitted]

Territories Arabs Barred From Jerusalem 29-31 Mar

TA2803171291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] From tomorrow morning until Sunday [31 March], Arab residents of the territories will not be allowed to enter Jerusalem. Our police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that this is a preemptive step in anticipation of the Passover holiday and Land Day, which is marked on Saturday. It has not yet been decided whether Arabs will also be barred from all other areas within the boundaries of the Green Line.

IDF Puts Territories Under 'De Facto Closure'

TA2903052591 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] This morning the IDF [Israel Defense forces] imposed a de facto closure on Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that workers have been prohibited from leaving for jobs in Israel and the transit of civilians will be restricted to medical emergencies. The Gaza Civil Administration, however, will allow the transit of trucks with citrus fruit for export. These measures are being taken with a view to the Passover holiday and Land Day tomorrow.

The police are beefing up their presence throughout the country on the eve of Passover and Land Day. In Jerusalem, police troops have been beefed up in anticipation of the noon prayers on Temple Mount.

Curfew in Urban Gaza Strip, More West Bank Villages

TA2903092791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] The scope of curfews in the territories is expanding. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that this morning a curfew was imposed on Tulkarm and Janin. The curfew in Nabulus, which was imposed yesterday, and the curfew in Ramallah imposed after the murder of Ya'ir Mendelson [on 26 March] remain in effect. In addition, curfews were imposed on refugee camps and villages in Judaea and Samaria.

This morning, a curfew was imposed on the urban areas of the Gaza Strip. The residents of the territories have in fact been banned from entering Israel during the first Passover holiday [29 to 31 March].

Kuwaiti Embassy Attacked; No Damage Reported

NC2803204491 Paris AFP in English 2022 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Amman, March 28 (AFP)—An unknown assailant in a car hurled a bomb Thursday that exploded in front of the Kuwaiti Embassy here, but it caused no damage, the emirate's ambassador said. The attacker fled after the bomb exploded at the front door of the embassy at 8:00 p.m. (1800 GMT). Kuwait's ambassador to Jordan, Sulayman al-Fassam, told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE.

Mr. al-Fassam said employees who had witnessed the attack told him what had happened. The embassy is located in the residential quarter of Jebel Amman. Kuwaiti diplomats and bureaucrats and their families, with the exception of the ambassador, live in a building next door.

There have been eight attacks in Jordan since October against countries in the anti-Iraq coalition. But they have caused no casualties. This was the first against Kuwait.

Saudi Decision To Halt Media Campaigns Praised

NC2803175591 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 28 Mar 91 p 14

[From the "And the Sun Will Rise" column: "A Good Saudi Initiative That Deserves Thanks and Appreciation"]

[Text] Ordered by King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia quickly stopped its media campaigns against some Arab countries. This was not surprising; it was in harmony with its policy, which has always been characterized by a desire to maintain unity of ranks and by a persevering effort to achieve Arab and Islamic solidarity.

In addition to ending media campaigns, King Fahd's decision banned responding to any criticism leveled at the kingdom, underlining a serious Saudi trend to rise above the negative repercussions of recent events and open a new page in inter-Arab relations.

There is no doubt that this positive step is an indication of what is constantly expected from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its monarch, King Fahd. There is hope that there will be a breakthrough in the Arab situation soon, thanks to the efforts the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will make to restore joint Arab action and clear the Arab atmosphere of all the blemishes caused by the recent events. The information available to all diplomatic circles in the kingdom affirms that the Saudi leadership is about to take urgent steps and hold intensive contacts to heal the rift in the Arab ranks and to resume dialogue and cooperation. This will benefit the Arabs and Muslims and their causes, particularly the Palestine question, which is now passing through its most difficult and crucial stages.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia deserves thanks and appreciation for its positive initiative to halt media campaigns. We are fully confident that King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, will take more steps toward reviving collective Arab action and resuming work and cooperation to achieve solidarity and joint Arab action.

Editorial Praises French Diplomacy, Mideast Role

NC2903123191 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 29 Mar 91 pp 1, 12

[Editorial: "France and the Desired Role in the Middle East"]

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn's visit to France is another important step in Jordan's diplomatic activity to mobilize the greatest possible international support for giving momentum to the stumbling peace process in this part of the world, which has recently witnessed a series of meetings and contacts to find a suitable basis for a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute and for a solution to all aspects of the Palestine question.

There is no doubt that France, where His Majesty King Husayn arrived yesterday, maintains an important position and can influence all parties involved in the Middle East crisis. This qualifies that major European country to play a vital and effective role in efforts to break the vicious circle and to take a large step toward the peace being sought by all the region's peoples.

What makes the French role more important is that Paris, contrary to its counterparts in the Western alliance countries, showed positive understanding of Jordan's position during the Gulf crisis, expressed sympathy for the Palestinian people, and called for giving the Palestinian people their right to self-determination on their own soil, including their right to establish their independent state.

To the deep satisfaction of the Arab peoples, France distinguished its position from that of the Anglo-Saxons when the Gulf war ended. It called openly for using the political momentum that resulted from the war to achieve the desired progress toward peace in the Middle East through a special international conference attended by all parties involved in this difficult crisis.

Hence, we attach great importance to his majesty's visit to Paris, and we hope this visit will result in a deeper French understanding of the Arab region's post-war problems, as France is better able than the Western alliance states to understand the current situation and its many complications and can contribute more effectively to defending the rights of the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular.

Contrary to that of some Western alliance states, French diplomacy, which is not affected by the spirit of vengeance and hatred has the ability to launch a historic initiative based on France's cultural principles and democratic ideals in order to heal the wounds caused by the Gulf war and to start a just and comprehensive peace process in the region based on the principles of international legitimacy, under whose banner France has fought, and in accordance with the Security Council's resolutions, which Paris has untiringly brought to attention.

Reportage on King Husayn Visit to France

WA2903173791

For reportage on the visit by King Husayn to France, including reports on his talks with high-ranking officials, please see the France section of the 29 March West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Iranian Envoy: 'No Hard Facts' on Hostages

NC2803184191 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] In Sidon, Mohammad Javad Zamaniyan, Iran's charge d'affaires in Lebanon, stated that as far as the Palestine question is concerned, the current situation is serious and sensitive.

Following his meeting with Mustafa Sa'd, head of the Nasirite Popular Organization, Zamaniyan added: We may be able to evict the Israelis from the Lebanese territories through politics or through international resolutions.

Zamaniyan said he has no hard facts about the fate of the foreign hostages. He said he hopes all hostages, whether in Israeli jails or in other jails, will be released. He said the release of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd would be a very important step.

Reportage on Council of Ministers' Session

Birri: Agreement on 'All' Topics

NC2803204891 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Dispatch by Ahmad 'Izz al-Din, correspondent of the NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY]

[Text] The protracted Council of Ministers' session ended a short while ago, and the ministers have begun to leave the presidential office. Minister Birri said an agreement was reached on all topics: disbanding the militias, parliamentary appointments, and the economic and social council.

As he left the presidential office, Minister Sa'adah said: We have made major concessions on disbanding the militias. As for parliamentary appointments, Sa'adah noted, our view was that this issue should be simultaneously addressed with other topics of the al-Ta'if Accord. He continued: Our view was not adopted, and we did not attend the final part of the meeting. We are waiting for the decisions of the Council of Ministers to specify our positions on them.

That is all we have now, and we will brief you on the Council of Minister's statement as soon as it is issued.

Militias' Dissolution Approved

NC2903083491 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] The decision to impose state authority over all Lebanese territory and the decision on the dissolution of the militias were adopted during a protracted Cabinet session yesterday. The Cabinet also insisted on discussing the provision on the appointment of the deputies separately from the other provisions of the al-Ta'if Accord. This caused Ministers George Sa'adah and Roger Dib to withdraw from the session. Sa'adah said: We are awaiting the decisions that will be made public by the information minister, and then we will adopt our position. He added: We have offered major concessions and some issues on which we did not agree were put forward for discussion.

Minister Dib met with Lebanese Forces Commander Dr. Samir Ja'ja' at night and briefed him on the atmosphere of the Cabinet session.

Asked by AL-LIWA' on the position he and Minister Dib will adopt on the Cabinet decisions, Sa'adah said: Our position will be defined in light of the results of future contacts. Asked if there is an inclination toward resignation or a boycott, Sa'adah said: Everything is possible.

Our political correspondent reports that before the Cabinet session convened, Ministers Sa'adah and Dib briefed President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Prime Minister Karami on the talks they held in Damascus. They asked for the ratification of the al-Ta'if provisions in one package, within a specific timetable, and by referring complete draft bills to the Chamber of Deputies. President al-Hirawi and Prime Minister Karami agreed either to discuss all the draft bills in one package or in successive sessions, or to approve them in one package and refer them to the Chamber of Deputies.

Our correspondent says that the atmosphere at the session was positive and conciliatory and that reports of Ministers Sa'adah and Dib's linking their approval of the militias dissolution to the postponement of the discussion of deputies' appointment are groundless. On the contrary, both insisted on forming ministerial committees for all the provisions and on specifying all timetables needed. Our correspondent explains that the militias' dissolution was approved after amendments were introduced and Ministers Junblatt, Birri, and Dib were added to the committee formed to deal with the issue. When the question of the deputies' appointment was raised, Ministers Sa'adah and Dib called for the formation of a ministerial committee to study the issue and to refer the draft bills on this issue in one package to the Chamber of Deputies based on the two ministers' concern over the implementation of all the provisions of the al-Ta'if Accord.

When the Cabinet insisted on discussing the law on the deputies' appointment separately from all the other provisions, Ministers Sa'adah and Dib withdrew from the session to hold further contacts with the Phalangist Party's political bureau and the command of the Lebanese Forces in order to adopt the appropriate position.

State Authority Affirmed

NC2803211191 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] The Cabinet has approved a timetable to reassert state authority nationwide as follows:

The militias have between 20 March to 30 April 1991 to turn in their weapons and ammunition.

The government forces will complete their deployment in the rest of Mount Lebanon outside the perimeter of Greater Beirut; namely, the Upper al-Matn, al-Shuf, 'Alayh, Kasrawan, Jubayl, and the al-Batrun and al-Kurah Districts from 20 April to 20 June 1991.

The government forces will deploy in the rest of the Lebanese areas between 20 June 1991 and 20 September 1991.

The Cabinet urged militia elements to integrate into state institutions subject to their taking part in training courses.

The Cabinet has also decided to ban illegal fund-raising.

As for the information media, it has been decided that pending their reorganization, all media organs will observe self-censorship through a committee chaired by an Information Ministry representative. Committee members will be chosen from the media.

The Cabinet has looked into the possibility of granting amnesty for some crimes and approved the return of all displaced persons to their original domiciles within two years from the deadline set for disbanding the militias; that is 20 April 1991.

The Cabinet approved the draft resolution on appointment of parliamentary deputies, the socio-economic council, and referred them to the House of Deputies.

Junblatt on Deputies' Appointment

NC2903113591 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Progressive Socialist Party Leader Walid Junblatt said that one must benefit from the current situation and from U.S.-Syrian rapprochement and not wait for the situation in the region to deteriorate. He emphasized the need to work to achieve whatever we can in terms of intra-Lebanese accord.

On the appointment of deputies, Junblatt said: Even though this cup is bitter, there is an agreement with which we should not tamper and that we must implement. We should also emphasize the qualifications of the appointees. In this way, we might fulfill some of the aspirations of the Lebanese public.

Five Killed in Explosion in Beirut Suburb

NC2903084391 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0815 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The internal security forces reported a short while ago on the casualty toll of the explosion in the Antilyas area, saying that the more than five people were killed and seven wounded.

Our correspondent in Antilyas Sa'di Ilyas said that the car carrying the bomb was an American car with license plate No. 1-216-480. It was parked near the Armenian Patriarchate wall. [passage omitted]

A military expert, officials from the Criminal Investigation Department, and ranking Lebanese Army and internal security forces' officers went to the scene of the explosion while the authorities worked to put out the fire. The explosion took place at around 0900 today.

Israeli Navy Intercepts, Blows Up Dinghy

NC2803210591 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] The enemy gunboats blew up a rubber dinghy last night off the coast near al-Rashidiyah camp. The nature of the dinghy's mission has not been revealed, and no information has been made available about the number of victims. While the enemy military sources admitted that it was a (?rubber) dinghy that was blown up when fired on by an Israeli naval vessel patrolling off the Lebanese coast, Radio Monte Carlo cited unidentified Palestinian sources [words indistinct] with explosives, intended to blow up an Israeli warship. The Israeli Navy, however, intercepted the dinghy and [words indistinct].

Israeli Aircraft Break Sound Barrier Over Sidon

NC2803173091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Zionist warplanes broke the sound barrier over the city of Sidon and its camps at noon today.

Amal-Hizballah Clashes in South Reported

NC2803203891 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1945 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Clashes took place between Hizballah and the Amal Movement in Frun in the Tyre Province tonight. According to news from the south, 40 Hizballah members stormed into the town and clashed with Amal members. Preliminary reports say three Amal members and three members of the Finnish contingent serving in the south were injured.

REUTER has cited security sources in Sidon saying that a man was injured tonight when an explosive went off near the home of a member of the Fatah Movement-Revolutionary Council. The explosion damaged three cars.

Afghanistan

Observers Say Rebels Defeated at Khowst

BK2903112091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1100 GMT 29 Mar 91

[By Marie-France Rouze]

[Text] Kabul, March 29 (AFP)—The Afghan resistance offensive against Khowst has been beaten back after two weeks of fierce fighting, according to officials and foreign observers in the capital Kabul.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Humayun Mukammel said the mujahidin "are retreating" after heavy losses.

"It's all over," echoed a foreign military specialist based here.

The offensive against Khowst, a city of 40,000 located 30 kilometers (18 miles) from the Pakistani border, was the largest battle so far this year between President Najibullah's Soviet-backed government and the resistance.

The mujahidin launched the attack March 14 with a hail of rocket and mortar fire. The government forces responded by launching Soviet-made Scud missiles from Kabul and sending reinforcements and air support to the Khowst garrison.

Nearly 200 mujahidin died in the failed offensive against Khowst, including 120 around the nearby town of Jaji Maidan, Mr. Mukammel claimed.

The mujahidin have not yet been able to recover the bodies of their dead from the battlefield around Jaji Maidan, attacked more than a week ago, he added.

Seventy-four Afghan guerrillas and a Pakistani advisor had been killed and 22 captured at Khowst, he claimed, saying Afghan Army losses totalled three dead and seven wounded.

"The security belt around the city of Khowst and around the two airports is expanding and improving towards the south," the spokesman said. "The aggression of the opposition forces from the north and northeast has stopped."

"There is no more threat on Khowst, Jaji Maidan and the airports," Mr. Mukammel said. But he acknowledged that the mujahidin could still hit the city and its two airports with long-range artillery.

The spokesman accused Pakistan's army and some of its militias of playing a "tactical" role in the fighting by firing rockets and artillery from border areas and sending airplanes and helicopters on reconnaisance missions.

Pakistan, the main backer of the Afghan resistance, has denied earlier accusations from Kabul that Pakistani soldiers were involved in the Khowst fighting.

Military experts here said the value of Khowst was more symbolic than military, as the city was not strategically located. However, Mr. Najibullah comes from the Khowst region, traditionally hostile to the mujahidin.

Dependent on resupply by air from Kabul, Khowst should have been a relatively easy target for a major mujahidin offensive, which adds to the significance of the assault's apparent failure, the experts added.

17 'Extremists' Killed 28 Mar

LD2803173691 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Units and companies of the Armed Forces carried out combat operations today in Khowst Province. The BAKHTAR military section reports that as a result of these operations 17 warmongering extremists, including the ringleader Nea'mat, were crushed, and 15 other were severely wounded. Heavy loss of life has been suffered by the extremist group of Gulbuddin.

All weapons and ammunition caches belonging to the extremists [word indistinct] have also been destroyed.

Mujahidin Free Three Swiss Red Cross Workers

BK2803142491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1355 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Geneva, March 28 (AFP)—Three Swiss Red Cross workers held by the Afghan rebels were freed overnight after 75 days in captivity, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said here Thursday.

The three, all ICRC delegates, were Fereydun Aalam, Christian Brunner and Yves Giovannoni. They arrived in Quetta in Pakistan in good health, the ICRC said. A fourth member of their team, Christian Martin, was freed earlier on March 10.

An ICRC statement said they had been held by the commander of an Afghan opposition faction and were released without condition after negotiating efforts by the Geneva-based organization in both Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The group was captured on January 12 while on a mission in Qandahar Province in southern Afghanistan.

Bangladesh

Prime Minister on Corruption, Plot Against Economy

BK2803164291 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has called upon the officials to strengthen the hands of the new government in its efforts to change the lot of the common man. The prime need, she said, is to provide minimum basic necessities to the neglected and deprived masses. She was addressing senior government officials, including secretaries, joint secretaries, heads of corporations, and autonomous organizations at the Osmani Memorial Hall in Dhaka this morning. Begum Khaleda Zia called upon them to work with sincerity, honesty, and dedication in realizing the hopes and

aspirations of the people. The people have given mandate to her party to serve them. If BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] fails, the people will not forgive the party.

Referring to the celebration of the national independence day only two days ago, she said changing the map and flag of the country is not the only aim of the liberation war. The people of the country took arms for independence to bring an end to all kinds of exploitation and deprivation so that they could have a decent living with dignity. Twenty years have already passed since our independence, but the basic needs of the people are yet to be fulfilled. Begum Zia referred to the misdeeds of the last nine-year autocratic regime which in the name of development served the personal and group interests and destroyed the national institutions as well as the economy of the country.

Begum Zia called for eradication of corruption from all institutions, organizations, and society as a whole. The prime minister also stressed the need for eradicating all sorts of anarchy and indiscipline from all spheres of the national life. In this connection, Begum Zia referred to the programs of the BNP government and said the responsibility of implementing these does not lie with the party alone. Since the BNP programs have been endorsed by the people through the national polls, it is also the duty of all concerned to extend cooperation in the task of implementing them. The main objective of the government is to increase production in fields and factories.

All ministries and departments will have to publish white papers so that the people could know the exact condition of the national economy when the new government took over.

Dwelling on the economic situation, Begum Zia said conspiracies are still being made to cripple the economy through black marketing, smuggling, and even release of fake currency notes. She asked the officials to remain on guard against such designs of the conspirators. About the condition in the government-owned enterprises and industrial units, Begum Zia said it would be impossible to make the public enterprises viable without bringing an end to corruption. If the public organizations cannot be turned into profit-making bodies, steps may be taken to hand them over to private parties.

Referring to the situation in the educational institutions during the autocratic rule, Begum Zia said the students were the worst victims of the period. Educational institutions were closed for a long four years out of the nine-year autocratic rule and, as a result, the students lost their age for government jobs. Steps are under way to extend the age limit to enable the students to enter government service.

Drug addiction is yet another misdeed of the previous regime. Necessary steps must be taken to eradicate this menace.

The other BNP programs include priority on attaining self-reliance in food production, special programs for the welfare and development of the womenfolk, mass literacy, minimizing expenditure on unproductive sectors and dependence on foreign aid.

Begum Zia said in spite of the limited resources, Bangldesh could achieve remarkable development and self-reliance by using its own vast human and natural resources. Begum Zia urged the officials to work freely and fearlessly in discharging their duties. None will disturb them, but if the officials are negligent and indifferent, action would be taken.

Referring to foreign policy, the prime minister said friendship with all based on equality and self-respect is the cornerstone of the country's foreign policy. Bangladesh wants friendship with all neighbors on equal terms. She emphasized the need for closer fraternal relations with Muslim countries.

Indian Foreign Secretary To Visit 30 Mar

BK2803135691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1227 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Officials said India's foreign secretary, Muchkund Dubey, was to arrive here for a two-day visit Saturday [30 March] for talks with Bangladeshi leaders.

His visit will be the first by a senior Indian official since Begum Zia became prime minister.

Mr. Dubey will hand over a personal message from Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar to Begum Zia, they said, adding that he would meet Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman, Flood Control and Irrigation Minister Majidul Huq and other senior officials.

He will also hold talks with parliamentary opposition leader Sheikh Hasina Wajed, they said. Further details were unavailable.

Two outstanding bilateral issues are the sharing of water from common rivers and insurgency in Bangladesh's southeastern hill tracts region.

India

Rajiv Gandhi Escapes Unhurt in Motorcade Attack

BK2803162491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] A PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA] from Saharsa in Bihar says that the Congress-I president, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, today escaped unhurt when a 2,000-strong mob attacked his motorcade during his election tour. The mob also reportedly tried to pull Rahul, son of the former prime minister, out of a jeep, when Congress-I workers intervened. Mr. Gandhi was attacked near Madhepura, about 160 km from Patna. A number of vehicles were damaged. Mr. Gandhi was returning from a visit of those villages of Saharsa and Madhepura districts which

were scenes of recent atrocities and burning of hutments belonging to the scheduled caste people by anti-social elements.

The Congress-I has termed the attack as preplanned and demanded the dismissal of the Lalu Prasad government in the state. The party spokesman, Mr. M.J. Akbar, said in New Delhi this evening that a reign of terror has been let loose on the people by the present government and the president, Mr. Venkatarman, should intervene to ensure a free and fair poll in the state.

Rajiv Gandhi Denies Attack

BK2903040091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] The Congress-I president, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, has denied a PTI report that he was attacked by a mob at Madhepura in Bihar yesterday. He told the crowded press conference arranged by the AICC-I [All India Congress Committee-I] soon after his arrival at the Palam Airport from Patna last night that his entire tour in Bihar was peaceful and he travelled in an open jeep all along. He also denied that there was an attempt to drag out his son, Rahul, out of a jeep and that a number of vehicles were damaged by the mob. Mr. Gandhi said that he addressed a gathering in Madhepura also and the meeting was peaceful.

Replying to questions, he said he is waiting to know what offer Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav would make about an electoral alliance with the Janata Dal-S in Uttar Pradesh. Only after studying the offer, the Congress-I would announce its stand about the alliance, Mr. Gandhi added.

Police Disperse Protest Near Shekhar's House

BK2803164691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Police burst tear gas shells to control Janata Dal and Dalit Sena [Army of Oppressed—low-caste organization] workers when they attempted to break the police cordon near the prime minister's residence in New Delhi today. Protesters wanted to submit a memorandum to the prime minister demanding an inquiry into the assault on the former union minister, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan, at Gorakhpur on the 21st of this month. Police said no one was injured in the incident.

The Janata Dal has criticized the use of force by police against the demonstrators. The party spokesman, Mr. Jaipal Reddy, said the police made no arrangement to arrest the demonstrators, but resorted to force to disperse them. He also alleged that several persons were injured in the incident.

Haryana Minister Asked To Prove Assembly Majority

BK2903043291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] The Haryana governor has asked the chief minister, Mr. Om Prakash Chautala, to prove his majority in the state legislative assembly by Wednesday. Our Chandigarh correspondent understands that a communication in this regard was sent to the chief minister by the governor, Mr. Dhanik Lal Mandel, last evening. It may be recalled that the state Cabinet in its emergency meeting on last Wednesday [27 March] had recommended the dissolution of the house. This follows the disqualification of three ruling party members by the speaker from the membership of the house.

However, all opposition parties have demanded the imposition of President's rule in the state after the dissolution of the house.

Punjab, Kashmir 'Militants' Operations Reviewed

BK2803152091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] In Punjab, 22 persons, including a Bahujan Samaj Party [BSP] leader and 11 militants, have been killed since last night. According to an official spokesman unidentified gunmen shot dead the BSP president of the Khamno Circle and six others in Ludhiana District. Three persons, including two Armymen, were shot dead in Sangrur District and one in Ferozepur District by militants. In separate incidents of inter-gang rivalry five militants have been killed in Amritsar, Gurdaspur, and Sangrur Districts. Three militants each were killed in separate encounters with security forces in Amritsar and Ferozepur Districts.

In the Kashmir Valley, one Pakistan-trained hardcore militant is among the 51 subversives arrested by the security forces during the past 24 hours. A large quantity of arms and ammunition was recovered from their possession. Terrorists also fired on a picket of the security forces in Mirza Kamal Chowk area, but they did not inflict any injury or loss of life.

Seven Die in Uttar Pradesh Violence; Curfew Set

BK2803140891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] In Uttar Pradesh, an indefinite curfew was imposed in Saharanppur town last night following violent incidents. According to the state home secretary seven persons died and 27 others injured in the stabbing and cross-firing incidents between two groups yesterday. About 40 shops have been reported damaged in the incidents of arson and brickbatting. The situation is reported to be under control. Additional police force has been deployed in the town to maintain law and order.

Sri Lankan Navy Fires on Tamil Nadu Fishermen

BK2803143891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] The union minister of state for home, Mr. Subodh Kant, has expressed concern on the indiscriminate firing by the Sri Lankan Navy on the Indian fishermen. He said in Madras today that the center has taken up the issue with the Sri Lankan Government.

Mr. Subodh Kant said the infiltration of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] militants into the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu has been effectively prevented after the imposition of president's rule.

Earlier, he reviewed the law and order situation in the state with senior officials.

Food, Medicine Shipment to Iraq Planned

BK2903081891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] India is sending another consignment of medicines worth 55 lakh rupees to Iraq in the next two days. An External Affairs Ministry spokesman told our correspondent this morning that the medicines are being sent through the Red Cross for the victims of the Gulf War. India has already dispatched medicines worth 45 lakh rupees to Iraq. The spokesman said that New Delhi is also planning to send food stuffs to Iraq in the next few days. It will include tea, rice, wheat flour, baby food and sugar.

Commentary Views Influencing Factors in U.S. Ties

BK2803113091 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Commentary by Professor Christopher Raj of Jawaharlal Nehru University]

[Text] Two concurrent developments of recent origin involving the United States are likely to cause concern in the Third World, including India. One is the now famous American victory in the Gulf over Iraq which has made the rest of the world apprehensive about a reincarnation of pan-American [as heard] and restoration of American hegemony. Second is President Bush's repeated proclamation of a new world order to focus on West Asia against a background of an emerging unipolar world. The recently announced American decision to make Bahrain the American military base in the gulf is a significant dimension of the emerging American security architecture for the proposed new world order.

In this framework, Pakistan seems to be assuming a new role. This is indicated by the apparent attempts to reverse Washington's stand on the Kashmir question by the U.S. ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Robert Oakley. The American position clearly since last year had not been favoring plebiscite in Kashmir and resolving that matter in the spirit of the Simla Agreement. The recent Oakley's statement includes, apart from declaring Kashmir a disputed territory, alarming phrases like Muslim Kashmiris and non-Muslim Kashmiris, implying thereby division of Kashmir community wise. Such phrases were never mentioned by any responsible American official in the past. One wonders whether this could be an early signal of Pakistan once again emerging an important U.S. strategic ally in the gulf as it had in the past following the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. If that is so, the United States could review the currently withheld U.S. annual aid package of $600 million [to Pakistan] and thereby encourage Pakistan to keep alive the Kashmir question and the nuclear program.

On the economic front, India-U.S. relations need further normalization. On the three components namely aid, trade, and investment, U.S. aid to India amounts to only $26 million. This negligible aid amount vis-a-vis has been an irritant because during Congressional approval procedure, Republican senators tried to block this amount on the basis of alleged violation of human rights in Punjab and Kashmir. Trade and investments with the United States on the other hand is very significant from India's point of view. Already bilateral trade has surpassed $6 billion. India-U.S. trade and investment relations are, however, threatened with Washington deciding to put India on the 1991 special 301 and Super-301 hit lists under the provision of omnibus trade act of 1988. Washington has cited India practicing unfair trade, especially investment and insurance, by introducing ceilings on equity ownership, export requirements and underwriting services in Indian insurance markets. Washington also feels that there is no adequate protection of intellectual property rights such patents, copyrights and trademarks. The Bush Administration is insisting that these practices be ended as the trend is mobilization of economy. India has development problems of social dimensions and cannot denationalize the financial sector. Nor for that matter can India throw overboard the MRTPA [Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act]. On the patent laws again, it is not easy to respond in the manner demanded. This holds true, perhaps, about FERA [Foreign Exchange Regulation Act] too. India's problems are further compounded by the falling foreign exchange reserves and its debt problem of $80 billion. Indian prime minister has written a letter to the leaders of Japan, Germany, Britain, and the United states for bailing the country from the current economic crisis.

Both India and the United States need improved relations and keep the dialogue, particularly in the economic sphere. Meanwhile, India can reduce the American pressure in an obvious option of increasing its economic interaction with West Europe and Japan, both of which are themselves to some extent affected by the American omnibus trade act of 1988.

Commentaries View Issues in Pakistan, Bangladesh

'Mr. Sharif's Triumph'

BK2803100091 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 19 Mar 91 p 8

[Editorial: "Mr Sharif's Triumph"]

[Text] By leading the ruling coalition, the Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad, [IJI] to a resounding victory in the elections to the Senate, the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mr Nawaz Sharif has strengthened his position significantly. The IJI won 30 out of the 39 seats in the 87-member upper house for which the election was held. The main opposition alliance led by Ms Benazir Bhutto has had to

be content with only four seats. Since the electoral college consists of the members of the state and federal legislatures, the Senate election would normally have been expected to reflect the dominating position of the IJI which it had secured in the general elections last November. But there were doubts about the IJI repeating its impressive performance this time because the intervening Gulf war had caused severe strains which, some observers thought, might prove detrimental to the coalition. In particular, Mr Sharif's own personal standing was seen by them as having suffered as a result of his decision to send a 10,000-strong Pakistani contingent to Saudi Arabia, a member of the US-led alliance against Iraq. Apart from the embarrassment caused to him by the army chief, General Aslam Beg's out-of-turn statements on Pak policy towards the Gulf crisis, Mr Sharif also had to pull up his Jamiat Ulema minister, Maulana Niazi, for taking a public stand contrary to the government's Gulf policy. In the event, the Prime Minister has not only overcome these threats to his leadership but can justifiably claim to have reinforced it.

Mr. Nawaz Sharif, for instance, had seemed to have come into conflict with the army top brass and conventional wisdom has it that no Pakistani politician on whom such a misfortune befalls can hope to survive in power. The Gulf policy issue apart, allegations of corruption against the Defence Adviser, Mr Ijlal Haider Zaidi, a nominee of President Ishaq Khan, had also appeared to have created tension between Mr Nawaz Sharif and the dominant military bureaucracy. If any Zia ultras in the military set-up did think at any stage of keeping the Prime Minister on leash, they might be having second thoughts at least for the time being. They must have noted the refreshing self-assertiveness displayed of late by Mr Sharif, not least by denying a seat in the Senate to the army's favourite and long-serving Foreign Minister, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan and thus ending his tenure in that crucial post. It is possible that the army top brass may not have shown the same degree of tolerance towards the Prime Minister if the outcome of the Gulf war were other than a total collapse of Saddam Husayn's military machine which seems to have had many admirers in the Pakistani army. It would be idle to speculate about this. For now, there is no doubt that Mr. Sharif holds the whip hand. He could not have hoped for a more satifying balance sheet after hundred days in power.

'Bangladesh Options'

BK2003095491 Delhi PATRIOT in English 21 Mar 91 p 4

[Editorial: "Bangladesh Options"]

[Text] By appointing Begum Khaleda Zia as Prime Minister at the head of a 32-member Council of Ministers, the acting President, Mr Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, has helped dispel some uncertainty attending the post-election scene in Bangladesh. Although Begum Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party [BNP], as the single largest party with a tally of 139 seats in the 300-member Jatiya Sangsad, had emerged in a strong position, the dawn of democracy seemed to be imperilled by the appearance of certain constitutional snags. The unfortunate failure of the BNP to reach agreement with the Awami League to help consolidate the ranks of those who want parliamentary democracy to be the stable form of government of Bangladesh not only delayed the formation of the new government but also left some question marks about the future of Begum Zia's regime. Apart from minor hitches like refusal of all parties, except the Jatiya Party, to take oath administered by the outgoing Speaker, which were resolved through discussions, the transfer of power to the elected legislators was stalled pending resolution of three major problems. These included questions regarding the continuation of the Acting President's council of advisers and formation of the new cabinet involving elected members of the BNP, especially in view of the fact that it had failed to win an absolute majority. The future form of government remains an unsettled question because any changes would require amendment of the constitution backed by a two-thirds majority in the present legislature. There is also the issue of resignation of the Acting President, who under the existing constitution cannot hand over power till a new President is elected and takes office. Matters were made more difficult for the Acting President when even after the Jamaat-e-Islami's unconditional support gave the BNP the necessary majority, the Awami League objected that since the joint declaration of the three major political alliances against General H M Ershad was in favour of handing over power to a sovereign parliament and not a particular party before changing the form of government, Justice Shahabuddin, a neutral person, could not form the Council of Ministers of a particular party. Justice Shahabuddin, a neutral person, could not form the Council of Ministers of a particular party. Justice Shahabuddin disregarded the Awami League's position and allowed Begum Zia to form a government on her own without coalescing with the Awami League. By allowing Begum Khaleda to form a single-party government, he has acted in a manner that did not take into account the broad front which had dislodged the Ershad dictatorship to amend the constitution which had been tailored to support that tyranny. Given the precarious balance of political forces in the country Bangladesh's transition to democracy thus remains fraught with difficulties. The trial of former President General Ershad which has just begun is one of the potentially explosive issues. With as many as 35 seats in the parliament, his Jatiya Party has emerged as a significant political force in Bangladesh. More important is that question of a change in the system of government which, unless effected, the Prime Minister will continue to remain with no authority to guide the government. The onus for this lies on Begum Khaleda and she must do so at the earliest to make the return of democracy to Bangladesh a reality, and this could have been easily done if she had instead of coalescing with the Jamaat, taken the Awami League in the government.

Iran

Italy's De Michelis Meets Velayati

LD2803115691 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Mr Velayati, in his first round of talks this morning with the Italian foreign minister, Mr de Michelis, discussed the latest developments in the Persian Gulf situation, the current internal situation in Iraq, the security arrangements after the crisis, as well as bilateral relations between Iran and Italy.

In that meeting the Italian foreign minister, elaborating Italy's standpoints regarding the new regional conditions and situation and submitting the proposed plan by the Mediterranean and Middle East Security and Cooperation Conference, said: Iran's role in realizing the security and stability of the region after the crisis is undeniable and fundamental.

Expressing appreciation for the expansive ties between Iran and Italy, he said: I carry the wish and political will of my government for the further deepening and expansion of ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran in all fields. My visit is a preamble to the imminent visit of the Italian prime minister, Giulio Andreotti, to Tehran.

According to a report by the Central News Unit, Mr. Velayati also elaborated on the regional situation and expressed concern about the continuation of instability and tension in the critical Persian Gulf region. He said: The stability and security of the region is important for Iran, as the most important regional state, and we believe that regional security can be achieved only through the presence and active cooperation of the Persian Gulf regional states. The Persian Gulf states themselves must bring about the requisite and proper conditions for the realization of an all-round, sincere security cooperation with each other. Mr Velayati once again stressed Iran's readiness to cooperate with regional states toward returning stability and security to the Persian Gulf region. The foreign minister declared our country's mutual readiness to expanding all-around ties with Italy and described the current visit by the Italian foreign minister and the forthcoming visit of the Italian premier as positive and most effective.

Second Round of Talks Held

LD2803181891 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Ways and means of expanding relations between Iran and Italy, and the state of relations between Iran and the EEC, were discussed this afternoon in the second round of talks between the foreign ministers of Iran and Italy. According to the Central News Unit, the two sides stressed the need for expanding political and economic relations between the two countries, noting that present ties are experiencing noticeable growth and expansion. Speaking of the importance the EEC attaches to relations with Iran, Italian Foreign Minister de Michelis said: This market [EEC] intends to open a new chapter in relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Foreign Minster Velayati expressed his regret at the massacre of the defenseless people of Iraq and his support for their right to govern themselves. He once again emphasized the necessity for the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. He said: The Islamic Republic of Iran opposes the dismemberment of Iraq and supports that country's integrity.

Meets Hashemi-Rafsanjani

LD2803122791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] This morning President Hashemi-Rafsanjani received Mr de Michelis, the Italian foreign minister, who has come to Iran at the head of a high-ranking political-economic delegation. In that meeting, the Italian foreign minister, having conveyed the warm greetings of the Italian president and prime minister to Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, expressed the Italian Government's desire to further expand cooperation between the two countries in the political, economic, and cultural fields. He added: My trip to Iran is indicative of the improved and expanded relations between the two countries in the wake of the Islamic revolution. Italy attaches great significance to the sensitive and significant role of the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI] in the Persian Gulf region.

Praising the principled stances adopted by the IRI toward the recent crisis in the region, he said: The European Community attaches great significance to, and holds much respect for the stances adopted by the IRI concerning the recent events in the Persian Gulf. It believes Iran should continue to play its important and valuable role after the crisis, which will be a very critical and crucial period. He further added: Italy feels that Europe must play an independent role to that end, and this mutual cooperation with Iran could have a significant impact on resolving the regional crisis.

On the internal situation in Iraq, the Italian foreign minister believed the resolution of the Iraqi situation to be of great significance in maintaining the future security of the region. He said: The continued hardship of the Iraqi nation has become intolerable and efforts must be made through international cooperation toward resolving the problems and realizing the wishes of the Iraqi people, to which end Italy and Europe are ready to cooperate with the IRI.

Remarking on the need to enforce a set of regulations for the payment of war reparations to Kuwait, he said: Italy believes that the payment of war reparations must also include Iraq's previous war with Iran, and just as regulations have been enforced in respect of the payment of reparations to Kuwait, the same regulations should apply in terms of the payment of reparations to Iran.

On the basis of the same report, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani for his turn, having thanked the Italian foreign minister for his remarks, termed relations between the two countries as good and growing. He added: With regard to bilateral cooperation, there are good potentials in view of the reconstruction period, and we hope to witness the further growth of such cooperation in political, economic, and cultural dimensions.

Voicing his concern over Iraq's internal situation and the daily increasing pressure being exerted on the people of that country, the president added: In our opinion the most urgent issues to be resolved is that of Iraq. No other issue can be resolved without the resolution of the Iraqi situation, and the establishment of any kind of security system must clarify the issue of Iraq.

Remarking on the great efforts made by the IRI toward resolving Iraq's problems before the outbreak of the internal crisis in that country, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Unfortunately, every day a large number of Iraqi people are being killed and the remaining resources of that country are being destroyed. The number of the homeless and the injured fugitives from Iraq to Iran is growing every day.

Referring to the false accusations leveled by the Iraqi regime based on allegations of Iran's intervention in the current crisis in Iraq, the president stressed the necessity of non-intervention in Iraq's internal affairs. He said: Today, because of Iraq's unclear and problem-ridden future no one can envisage any benefit in interfering in that country's affairs. Any assistance rendered toward the resolution of the Iraqi problem and turmoil requires self-sacrifice and not opportunism. We do indeed wish to seriously cooperate with you and the rest of the European countries to salvage the Iraqi nation's future and to establish regional security. We are ready to extend our assistance and cooperation with regard to any chosen rational and just solution.

Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: The Iraqi nation must be given the chance to take control of its own destiny. Unfortunately the Iraqi Government failed to use the opportunity it had in respect of joint cooperation by all the Iraqi strata toward the post-cease-fire reconstruction, thereby rendering national reconciliation in Iraq more difficult.

Our country's president expressed his gratitude for Italy's initiatives in terms of proposing the payment of reparations in respect of Iraq's war against Iran. He emphasized the need to pay attention to the losses incurred in both the past war and the recent crisis in Kuwait.

Discusses Expansion of Economic Ties

LD2803181191 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] A meeting today between the visiting Italian foreign minister and our country's minister of mines and metals explored ways and means of expanding Irano-Italian economic and industrial cooperation. According to the report of the Central News Unit, Mr. Mahluji referred to the expanding trend in the relations between the two countries and noted that the volume of commercial exchanges between Iran and Italy amounted to $2.2 billion last year. He added that the Mobarakeh steel complex, one of the major joint industrial projects with Italy, is projected to go on stream during the second half of the current [Iranian] year.

Referring to the positive results of the work of the two countries' joint economic commission, the Italian foreign minister said that Italy is interested and prepared to participate in the reconstruction and development of Iran's economy.

Joint News Conference Held

NC2903071191 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] After two rounds of talks in Tehran, Iranian and Italian foreign ministers Velayati and De Michelis attended a news conference and outlined the joint positions of Iran and Rome.

At the news conference Mr. Velayati told correspondents that during the two rounds of talks with Mr. de Michelis, discussions were held on expanding relations and on convening the two countries' joint committee during the current year. He added: The regional situation and especially Iraq and the solutions proposed by Italy, Spain, and France were among the most important topics discussed during the talks. Tehran and Rome believe that the Persian Gulf region is of special significance and that its problems should be studied carefully and expertly.

The foreign minister stated that Iran welcomes the establishment of democracy in Iraq and said: The continued presence of American forces in the region is contrary to regional calm and stability and we believe that cooperation among the Persian Gulf countries will create favorable conditions for ensuring regional peace and security.

During the news conference Mr. de Michelis stated that his visit is the first visit by an Italian foreign minister to Iran after the victory of the Islamic Revolution and said that there are no problems as far as the expansion of Iran-EEC relations is concerned. He added that the opening of Iran's embassy in the EEC and of the EEC representation office in Tehran is being studied and that EEC representatives will be sent to Tehran soon for this purpose.

The Italian foreign minister expressed gratitude for the Islamic Republic's principled stand during the Persian Gulf crisis and for our country's peace-seeking efforts. He described Iran's role in the establishment of peace and security in the region after the end of the crisis as vital. He also described the UN's role in the solution of

the Persian Gulf crisis as extremely important, adding that after the end of this crisis the United Nations should continue its active role to establish stability and security in the region.

Deputy Foreign Ministers Meet

LD2803171191 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Italy's Deputy Foreign Minister Mr Claudio Lenoci, who has come to Iran with Foreign Minister de Michelis and his entourage, held two rounds of dialogues talks today with Deputy Foreign Minister in charge of Euro-American Affairs, Mr Va'ezi. Bilateral ties as well as regional and international developments were reviewed at the session.

Ayatollah Kho'i Still Under House Arrest in Iraq

LD2803175291 Tehran IRNA in English 1618 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 28, IRNA—With Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Abolqasem Kho'i still under house arrest in strife-torn Iraq, doctors have expressed anxiety about the health of the 95 year old scholar who has a long history of cardiac, renal, and chest problems.

"My father is now in al-Kufah, near the holy city of al-Najaf, closely guarded by Ba'thist security forces", son Seyyed Saheb Kho'i told IRNA Thursday.

Saheb was visibly concerned for his ailing father, one of the senior-most ulema of the Islamic world, and said the grand ayatollah was "all alone with none of his kin or associates near him."

According to reports reaching from inside Iraq, the few remaining relatives of Ayatollah Kho'i in Iraq including women and children are still in prison in Baghdad along with several other prominent ulema of the al-Najaf theological seminary.

The grand ayatollah was abducted by the Iraqi Government last week and forced to appear on television, with a government interpreter doing most of the talking in the dubious broadcast.

The insulting episode triggered a worldwide wave of protest against Saddam Husayn's regime, with the leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, issuing a strongly-worded statement, and the charge d'affairs in Tehran being summoned to the Foreign Ministry to hear the Iranian Government's displeasure.

Meanwhile doctors in London after minutely examining the grand ayatollah's movements and voice in a video replay of the scandalous Iraqi TV broadcast, have expressed fears about his life.

Doctor John Costello the clinical director of King's College Hospital said that after seeing replay three times, he was convinced "the old man has clearly deteriorated between episodes and is now visibly breathless, distressed, and exhausted.

"If he does not get urgent medical care and the restoration of his family around him, I fear that he cannot survive."

Paper Denies Renewal of Ties With Egypt

LD2803202991 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1610 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 28 (TANJUG)—Official Spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry Morteza Sarmadi denied today that Tehran and Cairo had renewed diplomatic relations, which were broken off soon after Iran's Islamic revolution in 1979.

The daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI today quotes Sarmadi as saying that the two countries have only opened interest sections in each others' capitals, and that the two governments have not held any contacts about a possible renewal of diplomatic relations.

Tehran says it will not re-establish diplomatic relations with Egypt as long as its peace agreements with Israel remain in force.

Several Western news agencies said in reports from Cairo that the Egyptian Foreign Ministry had announced it was sending a diplomat to Tehran to act as a charge d'affaires.

Iran has had considerable sums invested in a Cairo bank and Egypt's textiles industry since before its revolution. The opening of interest sections is being explained as Tehran's desire to regulate its financial rights after Iranian commercial missions in Egypt stopped operating in 1987.

Commentary Sees 'Dark' Prospects for Iraq

LD2803213391 Tehran in English to Europe 1930 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] While official present sources [as heard] in Iraq are trying to depict the situation in certain regions as quiet and also the control of the Iraqi army in the area, latest reports from the sources opposed to the Iraqi government speak of continuing battles between popular forces and the Iraqi troops.

Based on these reports, heavy fighting is underway between the two sides around the cities of al-Basrah and al-'Amarah. At the same time the Iraqi army, dropping leaflets on the older city of Karbala', has threatened to use chemical weapons against opposition forces in the event of continuation of the confrontation. In this connection, it is reported that such weapons have already been used by the Iraqi troops against the dissidents in some cases. Yesterday two Iraqi MiG's appeared in the sky over Karbala' and bombed the opposition forces'

positions, killing and wounding a large number of popular forces in the province. Sources close to the popular forces have reported constant use of acid and phosphorus bombs by Iraqi planes and choppers against the people. This is confirmed by reports on the physical conditions of the wounded Iraqi people. The dissident Iraqi Kurds, who are waging heavy battles against government troops in northern regions, report that the Iraqi Army, in attempt to retake Karkuk and other liberated regions in Iraqi Kurdistan, has launched major attacks using artillery, choppers and bombers. It was also reported that the army is in the process of transferring Scud missile launchers to northern areas.

In the meantime, the state-controlled Voice of America reports that the Iraqi government, after crushing violence in northern regions, is determined through bringing together its troops to further concentrate on the war against dissident forces in northern Iraq.

In the same connection, it appears that Washington's indifference toward use of choppers and warplanes by Iraq in operations aimed at crushing the opposition forces is in fact tantamount to granting concession to the Iraqi regime for proceeding with its suppressive measures.

The reason is that since U.S. military officials permitted flight of Iraqi choppers and aircraft, subject they're not posing [as heard] any threat to the U.S. troops in the region, the Iraqi Government has been launching heavy air raids against all the liberated cities and regions. According to another report the Turkish too, in a press conference held in America [as heard], has described this decision of the U.S. Administration as a sign of America's help to Saddam Husayn in preserving his power.

Under these conditions, in view of intensity of clashes and use of various equipment by the government troops in crushing the opponents, prospects for further developments in Iraq continue to be dark.

Deployment of destructive arms such as chemical weapons by the government troops in fact can lead to yet another catastrophe in Iraq which will not only fail to lend any help to that regime in perpetuating its rule, but also widen the dispute existing between the people and the ruling clique.

Press Criticizes U.S. 'Leniency' Toward Saddam

LD2803113291 Tehran IRNA in English 0957 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 28, IRNA—The recent leniency shown by Washington towards Saddam's crimes is certainly a 'green light' by the U.S. to the "Baghdad butcher" to massacre people more easily, said a Persian daily Thursday. The morning daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in its weekly political analysis referred to a resolution being prepared by Washington and its allies which apparently imposes new conditions on Saddam but in fact makes the Baghdad regime relieved of the allied forces and permits it to continue massacring people with open hands. Even by giving a 90-day ultimatum to the Iraqi regime to destroy its chemical arsenals, Washington has encouraged Iraq to deploy the destructive arms against the people more hastily, JOMHURI said. In fact Saddam thinks that he will lose one of its winning cards in a near future and that he has a short time for the deployment of chemical weapons. For this reason Saddam is using chemical weapons in the entire zone of the uprising. The daily referred to Washington's confirmation of reports on Iraq's deployment of chemical weapons and regretted that it has simply ignored it. These events and the dual reaction of the West and especially the U.S. towards them has once again unveiled the inhuman nature of the U.S., said the daily.

Meanwhile in an inside page political commentary, the daily referred to statements made by Western officials including British and French statesmen on disintegration of Iraq. It warned that an Iraqi disintegration would seriously harm the national security of other countries and naturally the neighbouring states would not tolerate it. It said it was likely for the Iraqi regime to accept the country's disintegration and suffice to rule over a small part of Iraq in order to survive. Over the recent years, JOMHURI said, Iraq has shown that it will accept any plan for its own sake. But the paper added that the allied and the advocates of Iraq's disintegration should know that their party is not the Iraqi regime but the whole people of Iraq and that the regional countries will severely counter this plot.

Commentary Reviews Gulf War Consequences

NC2803132091 Tehran PASDAR-E ESLAM in Persian Mar-Apr 91 pp 33, 34, 35, 50

[Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Taqi Rahbar commentary: "The Persian Gulf Tragedy and Our Stances"]

[Excerpts] The regrettable Persian Gulf incidents and all the adversities that came with it were also full of lessons to be learned. [passage omitted]

The Persian Gulf tragedy unexpectedly proved the righteousness of our people, the legitimacy of our revolution, and the nature of the enemies of this revolution. [passage omitted]

Iraq's attack on Kuwait and the occupation of that country took place at a time when the reactionary Arab regimes, namely, the Kuwaiti and Saudi regimes had been extending their bountiful assistance amounting to astronomical amounts in the billions in the political, military, news and propaganda, geopolitical, and strategic fields to Iraq throughout the eight years of the all-out war against the Islamic Republic of Iran. They had also stated in their conferences that the threat of Islamic Iran was more serious than the threat of Israel for the Arabs! And, with this justification and with American direction, they started their extensive military adventure against our newly-established revolutionary country. They also went so far as to massacre the pilgrims to the house of God during the Hajj pilgrimage and in the sanctity of the House of God, thus wanting to

settle their accounts with our revolutionary people for having called for death to America. And they thus perpetrated the most wretched crime recorded in history. [passage omitted]

Even though the unprecedented attack by the American-led allied forces in the Persian Gulf was carried out on the pretext of ending the occupation of Kuwait and preventing the threat of a possible similar incident against pro-American countries, nevertheless, it was actually an attempt to show a fist to Islamic forces and to prevent the Islamic revolution from progressing. But, contrary to the predictions by the engineers of the plot, the grandeur of the Islamic Revolution was displayed even more. [passage omitted]

Even though the grounds for the allied aggressors' attacks were paved by the Iraqi regime with its idiotic and expansionist act which brought the aggressor to the region, nevertheless the West—the Americans, British, French, and others—went even further than Genghis Khan, Attila, Eichmann, and Hitler in their destruction of residential areas and vital resources and in their massacre of innocent women and children on the pretext of destroying Iraq's war machine. This behavior showed that the Westerners are among the most vicious human beings in the world, that they are worse than cannibals and without an iota of conscience. The thirst of the old wolves who are sitting in the U.S. Congress or in the presidential seat and in other parts of the world is so great that it can only be quenched with human blood. The human rights organizations are merely weak tools in their hands. They show sensitivity only when their world-devouring oil interests and their hegemonistic tendencies are threatened; and this is where human rights cease to exist! In their opinion only the European and the American race are human beings!! This is the nature of the Westerners which was displayed in the crusades against the Muslims. And in other incidents, their face was so wretched that there is no need to discuss it. The people of the world and especially the Muslims and regional people of the Middle East should know the nature of these pale-faced, blue-eyed enemies much better and not allow their sanctities to fall into their hands.

As for the Security Council, which is under the domination and pressure of the West and primarily the Americans, for decades now its resolutions against the regime occupying Jerusalem have been dead letters. After eight years of a war that was imposed by Iraq on Iran through plans that were drawn up and through aid extended by large and small forces of evil, the Security Council failed to identify and punish the aggressor. And finally, under the pressure of world public opinion, it sufficed with a resolution. While in dozens of other cases, like in Granada and Panama it was a mere spectator to blatant American aggression and intervention in the domestic affairs of countries without taking a suitable stance, this time it issued one resolution and ultimatum after another on Kuwait and followed up the issue by allowing America to use force in the Persian Gulf.

But the United Nations, which issues such permission, should have supervised the war instead of the American leadership, even though the secretary general had said that what America was doing in Iraq was not the war of the United Nations. Nevertheless, this organization did not react in any way to America's crimes while it should have at least issued a resolution against American savagery and reprimanded it for violating its decisions. Why did the UN Security Council play the role of spectator in the destruction of the Iraqi country and nation?! Why was Iraq's aggression against Kuwait an aggression which should be condemned while the aggression by America and its allies against the Iraqi nation and country was not considered an aggression?! Is not the massacre of the defenseless Palestinians by the Zionists contrary to human rights. Why should America make itself a hero and call on 28 countries of the world to enter the war against the Iraqi people? And why were regional governments not asked to try to achieve a peaceful solution?! Why—when political activities were nearing conclusion—did the Security Council not allow the problem to be solved through talks? Why did it not want the peace initiative to come from Iran, or from the Soviet Union, or from the nonaligned countries and for the plans for aggression, plundering, and hegemony over the East to be thwarted? All these speak of a premeditated and preplanned plot...and nothing more than this could have been expected.

As for the Iraqi regime, from the outset it has only brought adversity to the Iraqi nation. This regime created the problem of the eight-year war against Iran. Now what answer does it have for its nation today for all the destruction that it has brought to the oppressed Iraqi nation and to the region? [passage omitted]

The time has come for the Iraqi nation to choose a competent regime for its country and not allow America to determine its fate. [passage omitted]

Undoubtedly, the accomplice in Iraq's crimes are the Saudis, the Kuwaitis, and the other regimes which summoned America and placed all their potentials at its disposal to kindle the fire.

At the invitation of America and its allies and at the encouragement of America to trample on the human and natural rights of Muslims, the regional regimes—especially Saudi Arabia and Kuwait—showed the extent of their dependence and their willingness to do what they did in order to ensure the continuation of their rule and to please their masters. They handed out prizes to Western countries; they sent millions of barrels of oil from the wealth of the Muslim nation into the hellish reserves of the West and of the leader of world arrogance—America; and they undertook the major part of the war expenditures amounting to dozens of billions of dollars in order to show their willingness. And this was not unexpected from the regional regimes which did the same thing only in a different way during the war against

Islamic Iran—things they are now confessing themselves. Thus, the nation should not consider this black record as closed.

At any rate, even though the Iraqi regime committed a grave mistake, the grave mistake committed by the other Arab regimes and by regional rulers was not any less. But the crimes perpetrated by the Western allies are far more than all these and each of them will go down in history, never to be forgotten by nations.

Even though the victors of the war appear to be the multinational forces, a brief glance will show that this was not a source of glory for the superpowers, for NATO, and the world's military giants who brought all their naval, submarine, air, ground, satellite, and modern arms from all over the world to the area to create an unprecedented situation and to form a front in order to aggress against a country like Iraq. [passage omitted]

The principled and wise stances of the Islamic Republic in this destructive and useless war—from beginning to end—were praised by everyone and especially by the friends of the revolution, which consider the Islamic Republic as the yardstick by which good and evil can be measured on the political scene of the world today, and which use this yardstick to measure stances in conflicts. They saw that when Iran says that this war is not a war of Islam and blasphemy or a war of good against evil but instead a war of power or a war of oil, then it speaks on the basis of a specific criterion. No one in the Persian Gulf was fighting for Islam, or for the Muslim ummah. This war was not a war against Zionism and imperialism for Iran to confirm it. And if there had been even a very small possibility that inclinations were to the benefit of Islam and Muslims, certainly the Islamic Republic would not have doubted who it should support and would have also entered the picture. But no one was fighting for a divine objective. And Iran's sympathies were based on humanitarian feelings for the Iraqi people. Its decisive stands were vis-a-vis the crimes perpetrated by the multinational forces against Muslims and based on its role as a defender of the values and capitals that were being trampled on by power-thirsty madmen. It was support for the territorial integrity of Iraq in its political, geographic, and religious contexts; and this is important to us now and will be important to us in the future too. [passage omitted]

For the Muslim nations, neither the policy of Westerners nor the policy of Easterners are patterns to follow. And neither imperialism nor communism—both of which have been defeated and lack ideological and humanitarian elements—are systems to immitate. There is only one thing that the Muslims of the world and the deprived of the world can rely on and that is Islam, the manifestation of which we see in the policy and rule of the Islamic Republic and which can lead the way for generations to come. [passage omitted]

It is here that the responsibility of our revolutionary ummah and of the system of the Islamic Republic on the international scene becomes more obvious. The more successful we are in the test, the more possibility there will be to attract other nations of the world to us both in the domestic and foreign policies, and in international relations and other fields such as the cultural, economic, and ideological fields. The preservation of the traditional values of the revolution which was founded by our great imam and which is being continued today by the esteemed leadership, and our further efforts to preserve these criteria and values and successful experiences can make Islam and the Islamic revolution shine more brightly on the international scene.

"With hopes for the rule of Islam and the fulfillment of the divine promise that justice will rule in the world." [quotation marks as published]

PASDAR-E ESLAM on Need for Alertness

NC2803185491 Tehran PASDAR-E ESLAM in Persian Mar-Apr 91 p 4

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] "Verily from those who transgress, we shall exact retribution." [Koranic verse]

The recent incidents in the Persian Gulf make one wonder about the objective behind this war and why it happened to Iraq and Kuwait. We do not want to study the objectives of world arrogance in creating pretexts for further infiltration in the area, for assuming more power, and for confronting Islamic movements. We will discuss only how divine revenge does not come only on judgment day. God takes strong and destructive revenge on enemies and oppressors in this world also.

On the orders of world arrogance, the war the Iraqi regime imposed on us for eight years when Iran had just freed itself from American domination and was in great need of reconstruction was precisely aimed at the Islamic system, which had started the shout of "neither East nor West." In order to avoid direct involvement in the conflict, world arrogance chose Iraq to do the job and put all its material and arms resources at its disposal in order to achieve its objective. The resistance and valor of the heroic Iranian nation led by the Imam of the ummah, may his soul be sanctified, foiled the plots by the traitors of Islam and of the revolution, even though many of our dear youth were lost and many families in Iran gave a martyr during the uneven war.

The bereaved parents who lost their loved ones undoubtedly prayed to God to take revenge on Iraq for the blood of their martyrs; God soon took revenge. He avenged the blood of the enemies of Islam with the hands of the same arrogant powers that armed Iraq; Iraq was unable to resist, not for eight years but for a mere 80 days. Even though many of Iraq's economic and miltary resources were destroyed during the process and many innocent people were massacred (since the fire of war does not differentiate between good and bad)—and we are very sorry that it did so—the mania of the egoists turned into disgrace and defeat and the wrongdoer was avenged most severely.

During the war—in fear of the Iraqi regime—Kuwait also did not spare any assistance to and cooperation with it and was in one way or another an accomplice in the martyrdom of our dear ones. It too was severely avenged—by Iraq.

Now it is us against America, which is drunk with power and victory. It is in search of more victories and is constantly brawling and demanding, "Is there a challenger?" It apparently sees no one but itself in the arena and has not learned any lesson from the recent incidents. Some of the simple-minded people who are enamored with the West also think that America is now invincible and that no one can challenge it. However, we who believe in divine power, believe that divine revenge is righteous, and read in the Koran "but never will be warded off, our punishment from those who are in sin" and that we will continue to take revenge on the criminals and warn them not to be so optimistic about America and its other allies and not to neglect divine power. It is true that today Kuwait and the other Persian Gulf countries have pinned their hopes on America and are protected under its umbrella. However, they should rest assured that America cannot be their reliable umbrella forever, that this umbrella will definitely be destroyed in this world soon, that God's is serious in His promise when He says that "We will take revenge on the criminals," and that undoubtedly good will win and evil will be defeated, as He does not like transgressors and criminals "that He might justify truth and prove falsehood false, distasteful though it be, to those in guilt." [Koranic verse]

We should be more alert and cautious and look around carefully. We should not neglect the criminals' plots for one moment. Our Army and [Islamic Revolution Guards] Corps should—as also pointed out by the esteemed leadership—always be on full alert so that if one day the enemy starts entertaining thoughts about us, it will be pounded from the air and from the ground with God's support and encouragement. We should not fear these flimsy powers and should prepare for the promised day and for the army of the Imam of the Ages, God's praise be upon him.

Results of Anti-Drug Campaign Positively Assessed

LD2803200691 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1734 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The year 1369 [21 March 1990-20 March 1991] was an active and hard working year in the campaign against narcotics. During the year, the Islamic Revolution Committee, coordinating with all the relevant organizations, and in line with the preplanned programs, passed the stage of controlling the import, production, and distribution of narcotics. The officials of the Islamic Revolution Committee announced that according to the facts and figures at hand, the research made, and the reports received, the campaign against narcotics is having the desired effect.

During the year, the Islamic Revolution Committee, in line with the Val-'Adiat operations and in order to activate the campaign and strengthen public mobilization, implemented the Zafar-2, 3, and 4 operations throughout the country's cities and villages.

In all of the operations, 26,000 smugglers and addicts were arrested. Addicts comprise two thirds of that figure. It should be added that the figure does not include those smugglers and addicts arrested in various desert and border operations, or those arrested on a monthly basis [as heard].

For example, during the first six months of 1369, 12 tonnes of narcotics were discovered and seized, and 8,000 merchants of death were arrested. The officials of the Islamic Revolution Committee announced that as a result of the more forceful implementation of the campaign during the year, fewer smugglers were seen and the level of newcomers to the smuggling networks decreased. [passage omitted]

Currently, the Islamic Revolution Committee has announced that 300,000 addicts have been identified and 153,000 of those have been brought in, from which 22,000 have given up their addictions.

On the basis of the collected information about the networks involved in the production and distribution of narcotics, currently more than 50 percent of the main, active, and experienced networks involved in the smuggling and transportation of narcotics have been smashed throughout the country. [passage omitted]

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal

Human Rights Groups Not To Merge for Election

BK2903003691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1707 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Kathmandu, March 28 (AFP)—There has been an open split between Nepal's two human rights organizations, despite rumours that the two groups would merge ahead of the country's May 12 elections, sources here said Thursday.

The chairman of the Human Rights Organization of Nepal (HRON) said his group would have no connection with the communist-dominated Forum for the Protection of Human Rights in Nepal (FPHR).

Earlier on January 8, a seventeen-member joint team was set up to look into the possibility of a merger ahead of the polls, but several HRON members resigned, protesting FPHR's communist affiliations.

HRON is also opposed to the acceptance of aid from foreign governments or organizations. A stand FPHR does not share.

The HRON chairman said free flow of foreign money may have an adverse effect on the forthcoming election and could lead to the "criminalisation of politics."

Marxist Party Releases List of Candidates

BK2903091791 Hong Kong AFP in English 0752 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Kathmandu, March 29 (AFP)—The United Marxist Leninist (UML) Party, Nepal's second major political party and a ruling coalition partner, published its list of candidates for May 12 parliamentary elections Friday, party sources said.

The Communist Party, regarded as pro-Chinese, will contest 188 of the 205 seats in the House of Representatives.

UML General Secretary Madan Bhandari is to contest from two Kathmandu constituencies, facing Nepali Congress Party Acting President and Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai in one and Nepali Congress youth leader Haribol Bhattarai in the other.

These contests are expected to be closely watched, with political observers predicting that Mr. Bhandari will be no match for the prime minister but will be a tough opponent for Haribol Bhattarai, the former mayor of Kathmandu who was sacked by the then-panchayat government for opposing the abolition of the parliamentary system.

The autocratic panchayat system, in place since 1960, was abolished last year following more than two months of protests.

UML President Man Mohan Adhikari is to contest from Sunsari District of southeastern Nepal against Nepali Congress General Secretary Girija Prasad Koirala, who is also contesting from two constituencies.

UML leader Sahana Pradhan, the current commerce and industry minister, is to contest from Kathmandu against Prakash Man Singh, the district president of the Nepali Congress and son of Nepali Congress supreme leader Ganesh Man Singh.

Another UML leader and Politburo member, Jhalanath Khanal, is to contest from Ilam District in the east. Mr. Khanal, the agriculture minister, is to face Nepali Congress veteran local leader K.B. Gurung, party sources said.

UML Politburo members Chandra Prakash Mainali, Radhakrishna Mainali and Amrit Bohara will also run, as well as three ex-members of the dissolved national panchayat, Drona Prasad Acharya, Jagrit Prasad Bhetwal and Somnath Pyashi.

More than 10 of the candidates are women, including Mrs. Pradhan and Astha Laxmi, head of a progressive women's organization.

Pakistan

Accusations Traded Over Involvement in Hijacking

Ziaul Haq's Son Blames PPP

BK2803155091 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Federal Labor Minister Ejazul Haq has said that the involvement of the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] in the hijacking of Singapore Airlines plane proves the fact that the PPP believes in terrorism to secure power. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad today, he said the party was not only involved in the hijacking of a Pakistan International Airlines plane in 1981, but also in the Bahawalpur plane crash in which several precious lives, including that of President Ziaul Haq, were lost. He said the PPP cannot stand to see a person in power who has firm faith in Islamic ideology.

Zardari Blames Sindh Official

BK2803150891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1430 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Karachi, March 28 (AFP)—The husband of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on Thursday blamed the chief minister of Sindh province for the hijacking of a Singapore Airlines airbus.

Asif Ali Zardari, commenting on the incident for the first time, told journalists here that the four hijackers, killed Wednesday when commandos stormed the plane at Singapore's Changi Airport, were acting on orders from Sindh Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali.

Mr. Ali, an arch-rival of Ms. Bhutto, engineered the hijacking to defame her Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Mr. Zardari said.

"We will soon expose this conspiracy," he added.

Press reports Wednesday said the four men who hijacked the Singapore Airlines airbus wanted to speak by telephone with Ms. Bhutto and claimed to be members of the PPP.

The release of Mr. Zardari and about a dozen PPP activists detained since Ms. Bhutto's government was dismissed in August was reportedly one of their demands. The PPP has denied any involvement in the hijacking.

Mr. Zardari was speaking to reporters Thursday in a special court trying him for alleged complicity in armed attacks on camps of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement here last year that left 29 people dead.

Blaming the PPP for the hijacking, the Sindh chief minister said here wednesday that Ms. Bhutto was "head of the terrorist Al-Zulfikar organization."

Ms. Bhutto denied the charge and demanded an independent inquiry into the hijacking.

Begum Nusrat Bhutto, Ms. Bhutto's mother and PPP chairperson, was quoted Thursday as saying the "whole macabre drama was planned in Pakistan at a high government level."

Bhutto: Attempt To 'Tarnish' PPP

BK2803140991 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 28 Mar 91 pp 1, 10

[From M.S. Raj]

[Text] Karachi, March 27—Ms. Benazir Bhutto, former Prime Minister of Pakistan has srongly condemned the hijacking of a Singapore airline plane and stated that it was yet another attempt to tarnish the image of Pakistan People's Party [PPP] internationally and within the country.

The leader of the opposition, whose statement was issued from Bilawal House on Wednesday, said we strongly believe in peaceful, legal and democratic means of struggle.

Ms. Bhutto said, under no circumstances the government should indulge in any bargaining or negotiations with the hijackers and should never agree to the release or exchange of political prisoners.

Bhutto further pointed out that political prisoners, who were exchanged by Gen. Zia's martial law regime when a PIA [Pakistan International Airlines] plane was hijacked, faced untold sufferings and that their careers were severely affected.

She said even a component party of the federal and provincial government of Sindh has been accusing and blaming intelligence agencies of conspiring to kill their leader and despite their repeated demands no investigation has been ordered in this serious charge.

She demanded that this incident of hijacking should be investigated by an independent, impartial commission comprising persons of integrity acceptable to the government and the opposition.

Ms. Bhutto, it may be mentioned, had left on a three-day tour of interior Sindh. On Wednesday she inaugurated a school in Pano Akil and later left for Sukkur.

The Chairperson of Pakistan People's Party Begum Nusrat Bhutto has also vehemently condemned the hijacking of a Singapore airlines plane by a group of terrorists and termed it as an unsuccessful attempt by certain quarters to malign the fair name of Pakistan and create hindrance in the democratic process.

Begum Nusrat Bhutto denies all allegations by the government spokesman involving Pakistan People's Party in this dastardly act and warned the government to refrain from making such baseless accusations for cheap political popularity.

Begum Nusrat Bhutto has demanded that the government should set up an independent inquiry commission acceptable to the opposition which should investigate the entire hijacking episode so the real culprits are exposed to the people of Pakistan and the world at large.

She said that the information received by her up til now from various quarters including certain government sources suggest that the whole macabre drama had been planned in Pakistan at high government level and the hijackers were backed by forces who are all out to destory and tarnish the image of Pakistan People's Party.

Former Chief Minister of Sindh, Aftab Shaban Mirani, condemned the hijacking incident and said a drama was being staged to bring a bad name to the PPP.

He said once again groundwork was being done to drag the PPP into the hijacking case and register as much cases against the PPP leadership as it was possible.

Syed Khurshid Ahmed Shah, acting chief of PPP Sindh, said the PPP had never supported any act of terrorism and we would never support any incident of hijacking in which demands have been made for the release of some persons. He said we condemn the incident of hijacking.

Lahore Bureau adds: The PPP Secretary General Sheikh Rafiq Ahmed, PPP Information Secretary Qayyum Nizami and President of the PPP Punjab Fakhar Zaman have also condemned the hijacking.

Sheikh Rafiq linked the hijacking of Singapore airliner with the alleged kidnapping of Sindh MPAs [Members of the Provincial Assembly] to Bangkok on the eve of Senate election by the Sindh Chief Minister.

The President of the PPP Punjab has declared the hijacking as a conspiracy against the PPP and appealed to the Press not to indulge in kite flying on the issue without proper verification of facts.

Qayum Nizami alleged that the hijacking of Singapore airliner had been staged to find a pretext for the victimisation of PPP workers and leaders. He did not rule out the involvement of intelligence agencies in the incident.

Foreign Secretary Comments

BK2803134491 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 28 Mar 91 p 10

[Excerpt] Islamabad, March 27: The Foreign Secretary, Mr. Shahayar Khan, today said that Pakistan's position had been consistently against all terrorist activities and it was a matter of happiness that the lives of the innocent hostages on the Singapore airliner allegedly hijacked by Pakistanis were safe.

Talking to newsmen in the Foreign Office today the Foreign Secretary apprised the press of the details of the events which happened last night following the hijacking of the Singapore airliner while on way from Kuala Lumpur to Singapore.

He said on the demand of the hijackers for the release of six Pakistani prisoners including the husband of the

former Prime Minister, Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, Pakistan had conveyed to the Singapore government last night that it would not accept any demand from the hijackers.

He said the release of the people demanded included Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, Rashid Rabbani, Ghulam Mohammad, Masroor Ahsan, Mansoor Hasan and Naeem Syed. The hijackers involved in the hijacking as conveyed by the Singapore government were Fida Mohammad Khan Jadoon, Shahid Hasan Soomro, Javed Akhtar and Mohammad Yusaf Mughal.

He said on the request of the Singapore government, the telephone numbers of Ms. Benazir Bhutto were provided to them and in fact, the Singapore authorities did succeed in getting the call through but Ms. Benazir Bhutto did not come on line.

The hijackers had insisted that they wanted to talk to Ms. Benazir Bhutto and had promised to let off the passengers.

After getting frustrated for not contacting Benazir Bhutto, the Singapore authorities again contacted Pakistani authorities to help in arranging the telephonic talks with Benazir Bhutto. After which the Deputy Commissioner of Larkana was asked to find out the matter.

During this period, he said, the Singapore authorities took the action and got released the plane and the passengers.

He said of the five minutes, three minutes had already passed when the Singapore commandoes took the action. [sentence as published]

The Foreign Secretary refused to draw any conclusion and declined to make comment of a PPP [Pakistan People's Party] leader that the hijacking was planned by an intelligence agency. He said he was simply providing the facts to the press as conveyed to Government of Pakistan by the Singapore authorities.

He said the Singapore authorities on the conclusion of the heinous drama promised to provide all relevent information to Pakistan. He said he was not in a position to say if the hijackers belonged to Al-Zulfiqar.

The Hijackers, according to Foreign Secretary, also wanted to contact one Ghulam Abbas the credentials of whom are not yet known. They had given the telephone numbers 510031 and 510032 of Karachi for the contact but there was no response from those telephones. He said the Singapore authorities were in constant touch with the Acting High Commissioner of Pakistan in that city who was also in touch with Islamabad.

He said at about 12.15 a.m. Singapore requested the Pakistan Government to help approach the PPP leaders and request them to disown the hijackers. At about half past one, the hijackers insisted that if they talk to Ms. Benazir Bhutto they will let off the hostages. Subsequently he said "we tried to locate her in Larkana and conveyed her phone number to Singapore people who attempted the call but could not get through as the attendant refused to connect them to Ms. Benazir Bhutto".

During the whole development, the Foreign Secretary said, the Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif was kept informed. He said Pakistan assured all cooperation to the Singapore government in handling the situation and in the release of the hostages. [passage omitted]

27 Mar Cabinet Decisions Detailed

BK2803141791 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 28 Mar 91 pp 1, 6

[By Chudhury Abdul Majid]

[Text] Islamabad, March 27—The Federal Cabinet which met here on Wednesday, took several important decisions, including constitution of a high-level committee for submitting a detailed report on Singapore airliner hijacking case, privatisation of NPT [National Press Trust] newspapers except THE PAKISTAN TIMES, revival of women seats in legislatures, ban on prohibited bore weapons and construction of an alternate seaport at Gawadar.

The Cabinet meeting presided over by the Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, besides disposing of heavy agenda, discussed the incident of highjacking of Singapore plane by four Pakistanis and set up a committee under the chairmanship of the Federal Interior Minister, Chaudhuy Shujat Hussain, to investigate into the case and sumbit its detailed report within eight days' time.

Briefing the newsmen here on Wednesday afternoon about the decisions taken at the Cabinet meeting, the Adviser to the Prime Minister, on Information and Broadcasting, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, said that the Prime Minister had ordered for ensuring strict security measures at all the airports and sensitive installations and places.

All the security agencies throughout the country had also been directed to take immediate precautionary measures in this connection.

Deploring the hijacking incident, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said that the internal issues falling within the jurisdiction of courts were sought to be decided on foreign soil by certain elements in sheer violation of all norms of democracy and decency, which clearly showed that the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] had no respect for the courts and the democratic institutions.

He said that the hijacking incident had fully exposed all those who were involved in it. He said that all the hijackers held Pakistani passports. He said that the news of hijacking was broadcast by CNN at about 11.24 pm last night [1824 GMT].

The Adviser on Information reiterated the Government's stand not to submit to the terrorism in any form, including hijacking.

Giving brief details of the Cabinet decisions, the Adviser said that it had also been decided in principle to restore women's seat in the National and Provincial Assemblies as per before.

He said that in this behalf the component parties of the IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad] would be duly consulted before an amendment in the Constitution is brought before the Parliament.

Sheikh Rashid said that the Cabinet also approved the construction of an alternate seaport at Gawadar, which would cost Rs. 2 billion.

He said the Prime Minister had directed that the port should be completed by 1995.

The Cabinet decided to provide oil terminal facilities at Port Qasim and expansion of shipbuilding facilities at Karachi Shipyard and Engineering Works.

It was also approved by the Cabinet meeting to establish road and rail links between Pakistan and Iran.

He told that road and rail link from Koh-i-Tuftan to Quetta would be improved.

Sheikh Rashid said that the Ministry of Defence had been directed to submit a detailed report regarding all applicants for starting a new airline in private sector. The date for the purpose had now been extended up to April 15.

The adviser said that so far the Government had received about 17 applications for the setting up of private airline.

The Cabinet unanimously adopted a resolution, moved by the Federal Health Minister, Syed Tasneem Nawaz Gardezi, to felicitate Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the four provincial Chief Ministers for solving the 70-year old issue of Indus Water apportionment and reaching an historic accord in accordance with the national aspirations.

The Federal Information Secretary, Mr. Mazhar Rafi, was also present in the briefing.

Five Injured in Lahore Hotel Bomb Blast 28 Mar

BK2803154691 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Five people were injured, two of them seriously, in a bomb blast at a hotel near Lahore railway station this afternoon. The explosion also damaged the building.

Sri Lanka

Anti-LTTE Operations Suspended for Three Days

BK2803162691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] The Sri Lankan Army has agreed to stop all offensive military operations in the northeastern region for three days beginning from tomorrow. The Sri Lankan deputy education minister, Mr. Manohari Kulendran, said this will enable 35,000 children in the region to take up scholarship examinations.

In a press conference in Colombo, the defense secretary, General Ranatunge, said the area commanders have been advised to relax curfew till the examination is over. He said there is no major operation going on anywhere in the northeast. He said forces have advanced up to Alipur in Mannar District. He also said at the operation site in (Simulthurai), 100 bodies of LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] and a large quantity of arms and ammunition and transport vehicles like tractors were recovered from the LTTE.

Four 'Terrorists' Killed

BK2903105491 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0825 GMT 29 Mar 91

["OANA/Pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Mar 29 (LANKAPUVATH)—The situation was reported quiet today in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, except for one incident, official sources told LANKAPUVATH. The curfews in the north have been lifted in order to facilitate grade five school children to sit [for] their examinations. The sources said curfews will be reimposed as and when necessary.

Official sources said four terrorists were killed by the security forces in an abortive attack on a guard point at Thandikulam this morning at 0500 hours (local time). Apart from this, no incidents had been reported.

Local Government Elections Scheduled For 11 May

BK2903115691 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] The local government elections will be held on the 11th of May this year. The acceptance of nominations ended at 1200 yesterday. The commissioner of elections, R.K. Chandrananda de Silva, told the SLBC [Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation] that the UNP [United National Party] nominee for the (Adunagawa) urban council has been elected uncontestedly. The elections will be conducted for 236 local government institutions. Three thousand five hundred fifty-three representatives will be elected to these institutions. Local government elections will be held in 7,499 polling centers for 10 municipal councils, 32 urban councils and 194 pradeshiya sabhas [rural councils]. Recognized political parties such as the UNP, the SLFP [Sri Lanka Freedom Party], MEP [Mahajana Eksath Peramuna], LSSP [Lanka Samaja Sama Party], Sri Lanka Communist Party, Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, Nava Sama Samaja Party, the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party, Ceylon Workers Congress, Sri Lanka Pragatasili Peramuna and (Bahujuna Nidha Spiramuna) have put forward their candidates for the forthcoming local government elections. One hundred independent groups will also contest the elections.